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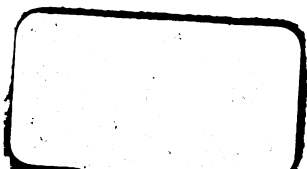
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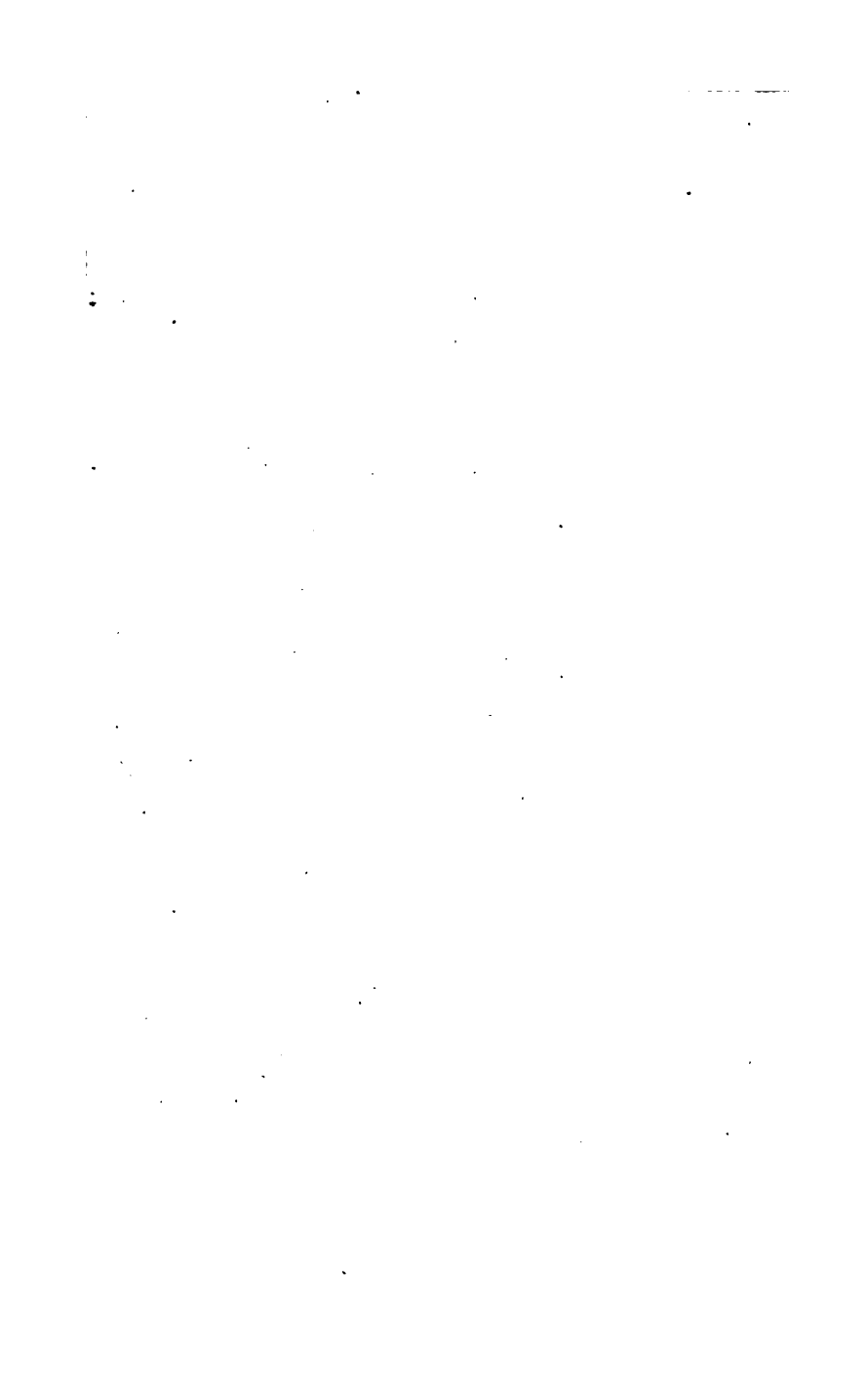
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M E M O I R S

O F T H E

MARQUIS DE ST. FORLAIX.

V O L. I.

THE AMERICAN

TO

THE AMERICAN

THE AMERICAN

THE AMERICAN

THE AMERICAN

THE AMERICAN

THE AMERICAN

THE AMERICAN

THE AMERICAN

THE AMERICAN

THE AMERICAN

THE AMERICAN

THE AMERICAN

M E M O I R S
OF THE
MARQUIS DE ST. FORLAIX.

Translated from the FRENCH

O F

M O N S. F R A M E R Y.

BY MRS. BROOKE.

*L'Honneur, de tous les biens, est le plus précieux,
Et par un vieil abus difficile à comprendre,
Nous le pouvons ôter, et ne faisons le rendre.*

T. CORNEILLE, *Illustres Rameis*, Act I. Sc. iii.

V O L. I.



L O N D O N,

Printed for J. DODSLEY, in Pall Mall.

MDCCLXX.

249. S. 318.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20250

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20540

RECEIVED
JUL 1 1964
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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P R E F A C E.

THE very high reputation of the following work in France, induced the translator to publish the two first volumes as soon as printed; perfectly convinced that whoever reads them, will bear with pleasure that there are two more, equally interesting, to come.

The general tendency of this novel to promote the cause of virtue, as
C well.

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well by exhibiting it in its native charms, as by exciting a horror of vice, and shewing the dreadful consequences of blindly indulging the passions, will, she hopes, sufficiently apologize for some exceptionable passages in the letters of Corfange and Henrietta; passages which, had she not thought fidelity the first duty of a translator, she would have wished to omit.

As the difference between French and English manners may occasion many things in the character of Mons. D'Ornance to appear overstrained to such of our readers as do not attend to that circumstance, it may not be improper to observe, that parental au-

6 thority,

P R E F A C E. ix

thority, especially in respect to marriage, is carried much higher in France than in England, and even to a height that cannot but appear to us extravagant: it is also necessary to add, that war is the first passion, it would be scarce hyperbolical to say, the *rage*, of their noblesse; their young men of rank being early inspired with the strongest ardour for military glory, before the ~~age~~ of which all other praise fades away.

There are many things in this work of which the translator would have been happy to have expressed her approbation, as well as some which candor would have obliged her to condemn; but she could not have entered

x P R E F A C E.

tered into particulars, without such an anticipation of the story as would have lessened extremely the pleasure of the reader, one of whose first gratifications is undoubtedly that arising from surprise.

Let it suffice then to say, that the picture of Henrietta appears to her to be drawn with too careless and too coarse hands. The painting is lively; and, allowing for the difference of climate, of national character, and the peculiar vehemence of her temper, perhaps, upon the whole, natural: but it wants that delicacy of coloring, those soft tints, those light, those almost imperceptible touches, without which it is impossible to delineate

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lineate the female character, even in its deviation from the genuine loveliness of virtue.

Whether it is the effect of nature, or of education, the translator will not take upon her to decide; but there seems to be something like sex in the very soul. A well-educated woman, and such Henrietta is represented to be, might possibly have felt a passion of love to the *degree*, but not in the *manner*, our author describes: she would at least have expressed it differently; even vice itself, in the gentler sex, till the mind is totally depraved by habit, retains the blushing veil of modesty.

Perhaps,

Perhaps, but this idea is offered with diffidence, woman alone can paint with perfect exactness the sentiments of woman.

MEMOIRS

M E M O I R S
OF THE
MARQUIS DE ST. FORLAIX.

L E T T E R I.

To Madame DE ST. FORLAIX, at St.
Forlaix.

MADAM,

Paris.

I HAVE been two days arrived here,
and have acquitted myself of almost all
your commissions. The Marquis of R—
and the Duke of B— interest themselves
warmly in the fortune of a young man

VOL. I.

B

whose

2 MEMOIRS OF THE

whose family has ever been attached to them. I hope by their means to obtain a regiment, and am the less afraid of waiting long for it, as the Marshalefs D'Eff— enters into our views. The morning after my arrival, I paid a visit to Madame D'Ornance and her amiable family. She did me the honor to ask me to dinner; she enquired after you, my grandfather De l'Etang, and my uncle De Prele, with as much concern and warmth as after Mons. D'Ornance himself.

Young Corfange, their son, whom you know I have not seen of near ten years, shewed me a thousand civilities. He is tall, well-made, of a figure the most seducing in the world. As to his disposition, he seems intirely changed; an extreme softness of manners has taken place of his first petulance: I think him quite cured of his follies, and he certainly owes this change to his confinement in the castle of S—. Youth is inconsiderate, fiery; it follows unwillingly

MARQ. DE ST. FORLAIX. 3

willingly the road which is marked out to it; that of pleasure is bordered with precipices: a young man's head too often turns at the first step; his sight is obscured, he falls, even when he thinks himself still firm. Let him be withdrawn from this perilous situation, let him be placed some time out of the reach of danger; reflection will come almost in spite of himself, will perfect his reason, remove the veil from before his eyes, and without difficulty destroy those light illusions which had been mistaken for radical inclinations.

Whatever my uncle De Prele may say, these forced retreats have their advantages.

Julia D'Ornance, besides that lovely feminine delicacy of person which you remember, has, since you saw her, acquired all that maturity of understanding, all those talents, all those graces, all those elegances of manner, which living in the great world can only give. I fancy I see my uncle

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smile at this passage: embrace him for me, but do not listen to a word he says.

I have occasion for all the charms which reign in this house to divert my thoughts from that chagrin which I always feel at a distance from yours. Julia has asked me a thousand questions about my sister Henrietta. She has not forgot her convent friend. She talks of writing to her soon.

Permit me, my dearest Madam, to assure my grand-father of my most tender respects, and to subscribe myself, &c.

ST. FORLAIX.

L E T T E R II.

To Mons. DE PRELE, at St. Forlaix.

Paris.

WELL, my dear Sir, and if I should be in love with Mademoiselle D'Ornançe, where is the great harm of it? The worst

MARQ. DE ST. FORLAIX. 5
worst that can happen is, that you will have an opportunity to laugh at me : you, who are indifferent by system, who profess to love nothing, who regard all affection as folly, all passions as maladies, which are to be cured by not listening to their dictates.— My dear uncle, I prize a thousand times more, the beautiful blue eyes of Julia, a smile of her divine mouth, or one sigh which I may have excited, than all your philosophy. Apathy may have its pleasures ; you say so, and therefore I believe it : but love, love, has indeed its charms ; and you have here the whole universe against you.

But to our subject. I do not yet love Julia ; I do not know whether I shall ever love her. I will even confess to you that her reserve degenerates sometimes into affectation. 'Tis a fault I cannot help remarking in her. She is really too modest ; but she is very handsome.

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I am in a habit of believing you implicitly, my dear Sir; but I shall begin to lose something of my excessive confidence. You are sometimes deceived. Corfange is a proof of it. You would never suffer yourself to hope this young man was capable of amendment; yet he is become mild, prudent, circumspect, in as great a degree as he was before violent, indocile, ungovernable: he is almost as modest as his sister; but she is much more amiable, though he is very much so.

Heavens! how gentle is his temper, how insinuating! He seems desirous to gain my friendship, and I believe will find no difficulty in succeeding. His mother adores him. You tell me 'tis this excessive tenderness which has spoiled him; but at present he deserves it. I intend to bring him to see you. You will love him. As for Julia, I will undertake to love her all myself.

Adieu!

MARQ. DE ST. FORLAIX. 7

Adieu ! my dear uncle ! If you were capable of loving any thing in nature, it would be this family, and your nephew.

I am, &c.

ST. FORLAIX.

L E T T E R III.

To the Marquis DE ST. FORLAIX.

YES, certainly I shall laugh at you :
I shall even do more, I shall chide you exceedingly. Observe my young man. He leaves his family to go to Paris : and what to do ? You imagine perhaps 'tis to advance himself in the service, to solicit a regiment ; at least 'twas on that pretence he left them. Not at all. He goes to sigh at the feet of a mistress, to utter a torrent of insipid common-place, of impertinences which he calls compliments, to swear to her a heap of absurdities which

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never existed but in his head, and which he asserts are in his heart. The goddess suffers herself to be touched by degrees; her soul, softened by his vows, yields to the violence of his passion (you see I employ terms of art). Our two young fools fancy themselves madly in love, and that this love will last for ever. At length they marry, to undeceive themselves.

A regiment becomes vacant: an honest man who does not know whether the eyes of Mademoiselle Julia are blue or not, but who knows that it is necessary to be something in this world, and that he has only himself to depend upon; this wise man solicits, obtains the regiment: and my nephew perceives, but rather too late, that he has done a foolish thing. Your mother is, like you, enchanted that Madame D'Ornance has given you so obliging a reception; she already looks on this marriage as determined. She wishes it as earnestly as you. "My son," says she, "will enter into a distinguished family. Do you know, brother,

MARQ. DE ST. FORLAIX. 9

“ brother, that their house is near three
“ hundred years more ancient than ours?
“ To whom will he not be allied? I at-
“ ways said, my son would be an honor to
“ his family.”

Don't, however, attend to this. Be a Colonel, and go seek honor where it is to be found, since this vanity bears the name of honor as well as many others. 'Tis necessary to have prejudices in the early part of life; they serve instead of true virtue: 'tis only at my age that 'tis allowable to throw off their yoke.

Take your chance, my friend, in the lottery of fortune; if you succeed, you will gain vain dignities, glory, and frivolous titles, of which you will soon feel the little real value: but you will at least draw from them the advantage of being independent. If you fail, you will still be so, tho' in a less elevated station, and will have no cause to reproach yourself.

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But quit your fine sentiments, for two reasons: that they do not exist; and that if they did, they would be both ridiculous and destructive.

Friendship is quite another affair. I will one day communicate to you my general thoughts on this subject; my particular ones are, that 'tis an affection you must by no means at present give way to: that especially which I see you ready to enter into with Corfange displeases me extremely. He had at fifteen a heart greatly corrupted. I much doubt its being better at twenty. His character will, at the latest, unveil itself at thirty; I would wager, 'tis that of a man lost for ever to virtue. Take care of him; his future conduct is not of so little consequence to you as you imagine.

Your grandfather, Monf. De l'Etang, who is of my sister's opinion in what regards Mademoiselle D'Ornance, is of mine in respect to her brother. "When the
" heart,

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heart, said he, "has taken a wrong bent, "it may, though with difficulty, be corrected or dissembled; but at length this tendency is the part by which it will fail."

The good Baron, whose reasonings are sometimes those of eighty-six, thinks very justly on this occasion. Don't contradict him; for he is rather opinionated, and, as you well know, not easily persuaded to give up his own ideas.

Value as he deserves the valet de chambre I recommended to you, the faithful Germain. He is not a young man, on whom there is no dependance: he is wise and honest, which is a point of no small consequence in the world, the ways of which he knows, and will not in that respect be unuseful to you. In one word, I esteem him, and would not have parted from him, even to you, if I had not felt that I began to attach myself to him too strongly.

B. 6.

Adieu!!

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Adieu ! Since Madame D'Ornance enquires so warmly, after me, tell her I am well. Think of the regiment ; make the most of your great friends, but don't depend too much upon them. Who is this Madame D'Eff—— ?

Yours, &c.

DE PRELÉ.

L E T T E R IV.

TO HENRIETTA DE ST. FORLAIX, at
St. Forlaix.

YOU have great reason to doubt my friendship. It is near three months since we left the convent, and I have never yet wrote to my dear Henrietta. I am very blameable, I confess it ; but she is indulgent, and will pardon me : I will not even attempt to excuse myself.

O,

O, my friend! what is this world, so much boasted, and of which we form to ourselves so agreeable an idea? Our good nuns, who, to disgust us with it, paint it all charming and seducing, ought rather to tell us it is tedious and insipid. They would with more certainty arrive at the end proposed, and would be much nearer the truth.

Imagine to yourself a confused crowd where no one is distinguishable, conversations frivolous and incoherent, men to an insupportable degree wearisome and impertinent, women ridiculous, fantastical, and vain; and you see the great world, the world so much loved and admired.

Add to this portrait, a varnish of immodesty and indecency, diffused over the whole air of those whose characteristic ought to be the contrary qualities. As to me, having been educated within the strictest bounds of modesty and honor, I cannot

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easily accustom myself to all I see. Could you, my Henrietta, conceive that women who pass for virtuous would dare to speak of love, and its pleasures, to a girl of seventeen, and, without blushing, question her on the state of her heart, as on any indifferent subject? They ridicule me when I look down at the name of love; they talk of it aloud before me; they make me proposals of marriage with a gaiety and ease which would make me suspect extremely their virtue, if I was not sure of my mother's delicacy in the choice of her friends.

The men are still worse; I do not believe that, since I left the convent to come to Paris, I have been alone with one who has not sworn to me that he adored me. Sit next a man in a public place, or let him give you his hand on any occasion, and you may depend on a declaration in form. Judge how very persuasive! They would be extremely mistaken, if they supposed I gave the least attention to their idle discourse.

This

This liberty degenerates even into licentiousness; they often carry their effrontery to the degree of attempting to kiss a hand which they have already had the hardness to touch, and press in theirs as they please. The wretches! If they ever love, they will be as little reserved in its pleasures. Lament, my dear Henrietta, their folly and inconsistency.

Do you know who of all the young men I have seen appears to me the most respectful, the most virtuous, the most modest, notwithstanding his vivacity? Your brother, Monf. De St. Forlaix. He has already paid us two or three visits. His behaviour has ever the same distance, the same reserve; he is consistent in all. He is very different from the young men of Paris, but I am afraid he will be spoiled here.

He looks at me often; but has the polite attention to lower his eyes when they
chance

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chance to meet mine. He sometimes gives me his hand; I feel it tremble in mine, which he never dares like the others to press. This timidity flatters me. We have been often together, and even some moments alone; but he has never said the least thing that had the air of a declaration. This young man appears to me very accomplished. I have desired my brother to be with him as often as possible; he could not fail to gain by his acquaintance.

Adieu, my dear Henrietta! my first, my only friend! Let us write to each other, to soften the chagrin of absence: believe me, I should be a thousand times more amused in a desert, if with you, than in this noisy and tumultuous society, which they falsely call lively and animated. Solitude is agreeable to pure and sensible hearts; 'tis only when afraid of our own reflections that we fear a calm, and seek dissipation. The secret reproaches of conscience are often mistaken for weariness and lassitude of mind.

We

MARQ. DE ST. FORLAIX. 17

We have been alone, and never known it. It fixes its residence in great cities, without penetrating to solitary retreats. It is much easier to find amongst a small number the soul congenial to our own, than to discover it in a mixed multitude. Yours, my dear Henrietta, is the soul which mine would seek ; but fate ordains us to be separated.

Adieu !

L E T T E R V.

HENRIETTA to JULIA, at Paris.

MY Julia ! Is it you who write to me ? you who draw my senses from their lethargic insensibility ! You penetrate even to my heart through the thick veil which covers it. Alas ! this unworthy heart, so different from what it was, scarce thinks
of

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of the friend who has awakened its sensations. In the midst of dissipation, you remember me; whilst, in the bosom of a calm and lonely retreat, the image of my tender friend is almost effaced from my mind. 'Tis you, notwithstanding, whom my unquiet soul pursues; it seeks a friend in whose bosom it may repose all its ideas, but is ignorant of the distinct aim of its desires! It resembles a man straying in a thick forest; the more he endeavors to regain the right path, the deeper he is bewildered in the labyrinth; he sees often the road which would extricate him, but he mistakes and neglects it.

How subject to change are human beings! The Henrietta who writes to you from St. Forlaix is very different from her whom you loved at the convent of G—; lively and gay even to folly, ever accompanied, ever announced, by the laugh of joy: now, buried in a dark and stupid melancholy, my heart void, devoted to sorrow, speaks
no

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no language but that of sighs. You, who have ever been the confidant of my pleasures and my pains, enlighten me on my present state of mind : tell me why I am a continual prey to restless desires, without knowing what it is I desire ; why I am insensible to all that used to affect me ; why all that I most loved is become every hour more irksome to my soul. I am myself ignorant ; no ray of light offers itself to illuminate my horrible situation.

Yes, 'tis from you, my Julia, from you I expect this light ; the disorder I felt on reading your letter convinces me 'tis you who are necessary to me. All my tenderness, which was only suppressed, not diminished, is revived with redoubled warmth. An ardor which was till this moment unknown to me, and which confuses all my senses, has taken place of my former languor. I know as little the source of one as of the other ; but, however painful this
new

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new state of mind may be, I prefer it infinitely to that which I have quitted.

O! my tender friend! Tell me why the disagreeable picture you have drawn of an indecent and ridiculous world has made on me almost the same impression as if you had painted it in the most seducing colors. I am very far from being either vicious or coquet, yet I could not read without feeling an extreme emotion what you wrote to me on the subject of love. You cannot suspect me of being sensible to the unmeaning flatteries which a crowd of coxcombs, either from habit or a design to seduce, lavish on our too credulous sex. I have notwithstanding been affected by their idea.

But why search abroad for a cause which is so near? You were always soft and tranquil, my Julia. Solitude was made for you; you can taste all its charms. My ardent and impetuous soul was not formed
for

MARQ. DE ST. FORLAIX. 21

for the dismal repose to which it is doomed. Not being put in motion, it languishes. The world and all its hurry would be its element. It dies in the horror of retreat; it is the tumultuous portrait which you have drawn which has determined this. This soul has found its own existence in the description of scenes with which it could be pleased. Your letter has opened my eyes on the nothingness of all which surrounds me. I have seen that I am indeed alone, and that dissipation is to me absolutely necessary.

Yes, my dear friend, I am sure I should find a thousand charms in this world, which to you appears insupportable. We judge of all things by the relation they have to our own tastes; without either seeking or avoiding their declarations, I should see in that crowd of admirers which is to you so displeasing, a lively animated society, which would fill, by dissipation, the frightful void in my heart.

Why

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Why cannot we change situations? we should then both be happy. Why can I not at least have you near me? If you did not intirely, you would at least in a great measure, supply to me the place of society. Pardon, my Julia, the frankness of these confessions. Perfect sincerity is one of the greatest charms of friendship. Write to me often. Since my other wishes are vain, and fate has placed us in a situation so contrary to the turn of our minds, let us lessen by constant correspondence the distance which separates us.

You flatter me extremely by the preference you give my brother. I should know him by your description of his manner. But don't you think, my dear, he loves you? It is certainly possible, as he has seen you. Yes, my Julia, you deceive yourself: he loves you, indeed he must love you; he must have that propensity
3 from

MARQ. DE ST. FORLAIX. 23

from his sister, from your good friend
Henrietta.

Adieu!

L E T T E R VI.

To Mons. DE PRELE, at St. Forlaix.

THE Marquis of R—, whom I had the honor of seeing yesterday, has given me very flattering hopes of a regiment. He wrote in my favor whilst I was with him to the Prime Minister, in the most polite manner that can be conceived. He makes me hope I shall soon owe my establishment to his good offices. After I left him, I went to the Duke of R—, who had the goodness to take me to visit Madame D'Ess—, who, as I have already told you, my dear uncle, interested herself for me at first sight.

She is tall, finely made, and still very handsome: she is at the most thirty-five, and
ow

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owns herself twenty-eight, which is being very reasonable.

When we came to her house, she was in bed, and consequently had gone through only one operation of the toilet, which gave us the better opportunity to judge of her bloom. She has the unfortunate habit of putting on white; she has not the least occasion, her complexion would be sufficiently beautiful without that assistance: she gave us a proof of this, by letting us see more than it is customary to paint. But she is an Italian; and the women of her country, however fair, cannot bring themselves to leave off this pernicious custom.

I have remarked but one false tooth. The rest are beautiful, and I believe firm. She has lovely hair, and all natural: as to her eye-brows, the art she has used has done them a little hurt, and they will gain by being put in order. Upon the whole, my dear uncle, she is a *court lady*.

The

The Duke's intimacy with her enabled me to make this scrutiny. It is not every body who is allowed to enter between the first and second arrangement of her person. There are some who have not the privilege of seeing her except after the third.

She received me perfectly well. The Duke introduced me as if for the first time.

“O! I know him very well,” said she.
“This is the young man who is soliciting
“a regiment. Yes, indeed, he will be-
“come the rank of Colonel. The most
“charming person in the world: a fine air,
“and enchantingly young. How old are
“you? twenty?”

“Twenty-two, Madam.”

“Twenty-two! heavens! what bloom!
“I would wager, he dances admirably.
“You have not perhaps been at the ball
VOL. I. C “since

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“ since you came to Paris. You must
“ dance with me. What lovely eyes he
“ has, my Lord Duke! O! he must be a
“ Colonel!”

Here she made me approach her bed —
“ But how your hair is dressed! That is
“ extremely against you. You must take
“ care of yourself, if you wish to make
“ your way in the world. My Lord Duke,
“ you must prefer him. He is very pro-
“ mising. A Colonel at twenty-two! (for
“ I am resolved he shall be a Colonel)—
“ if he behaves as he ought in the army,
“ which I do not doubt, all our women will
“ quarrel for him at his return. As to me,
“ I have a very high idea of him: I quite
“ doat on him. But he must have his hair
“ better dressed.”

As she said this, she let me see as much
of her bosom as she chose should be seen.
But, that the pleasure in which she in-
dulged me might not last too long, she

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took care from time to time to cover it, though awkwardly enough. We at length took our leave. She bid me adieu above twenty times, repeated as often her offers of serving me, pressed my hand, gave me hers to kiss, and we parted.

As we went out, the Duke said to me,
“ This woman has a mind to you ; you
“ may have her whenever you please.
“ Improve this inclination, for she really
“ has great power: but take my advice ;
“ do not yield ; be cruel till you have got
“ the regiment. Her fancy of obliging
“ you will last no longer than that of loving
“ you ; in other words, about eight days.”

I told the Duke, his counsels should ever be to me commands. He does not know all the reasons I have to be of his opinion ; as to the rest, he gave me hopes that, thanks to my fine eyes and beautiful hair, I should have my regiment in a few months.

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What a difference between this confident woman, and the modest Julia D'Ornance! But I stop; her name, her charms, her virtues, are profaned by this odious comparison.

Ah! my dear uncle! But adieu!

LET-

L E T T E R VII.

To Monf. DE ST. PRELE, at St. Forlaix.

MY dear Sir, I will never be a philosopher: those who are, pretend to know every thing, and almost always deceive themselves. You, for example, think you know mankind; and you are mistaken in this, as well as in many other things. Germain, my valet de chambre, whom you gave me as a governor, a counsellor, one who knew the world, and could guide me in the road on which I was about to enter, exhibits a strong proof of the truth of my assertion. This prodigy of wisdom and judgement, this miracle of virtue and integrity, I have been obliged to part with this morning, because he has robbed me.

You remember my watch set with diamonds, which my grandfather De l'Etang gave me? I was a little indisposed yesterday, and never left the house. I had only two visitors, the Marquis De R— and Corfange; and yet my watch disappeared. I missed it this morning, called Germain, and with some emotion asked him, what he had done with my watch? He told me he had not seen it. I was in a rage. I seized him by the arm. He trembled, he blushed; he turned pale; I no longer doubted having discovered the thief, and turned him away instantly. I believe, my dear uncle; that you would have done the same, and that you will not blame me.

After all, it is only a watch lost: which is not paying very dear for the knowledge of a man who might, in the end, have injured me much more essentially. You have taken a fancy to this man merely because he is above forty years old, as if men
were

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were not capable of committing follies at all ages.

This is by no means my opinion. Seriously, my dear Sir, I cannot conceive, how with your indifference, your cold prudence, you could make such a choice. But let *Monf. Germäin* go his way in peace, if he can. I forgive him. Let us talk of other things.

I wish I had not found *Mademoiselle D'Ornance* so beautiful, so gentle, so formed to inspire tenderness, that you might have been mistaken in divining I should be in love with her. For this once you are in the right. Yes, my dearest uncle, I am enchanted with her; every day I discover in her new graces; every day they make a deeper impression on my heart; every day increases in me the desire of seeing her again; the hours I pass absent from her seem insupportably long. If this is not love, it comes very near it.

You delight me by approving my passion for her; for not to oppose it more violently than you do, is to approve it. You are very certain it is a fire that will go out of itself; but I am as certain of the contrary. If her qualities were only shining, they might be transitory, and my love would cease with the illusion; but through all the splendor of her merit, 'tis easy to discover its solidity. True wisdom is ever the same; the charms of the mind do not fade like those of the body. I shall always love her, because those are the charms I love in her; and because the attractions which render her truly amiable are those she will preserve for ever.

How you would laugh, how you would ridicule me, if you were with us! I have been acquainted with her, have thought her charming above fifteen days, and have never yet once told her so. I am already on a very familiar footing in the family,
and

and we are often left accidentally alone. I find myself near her, I look at her, I scarce dare even to breathe, lest she should mistake it for a sigh. I do not presume to touch her hand, but I contrive to put mine on whatever she has touched. I examine her work, I kiss it sometimes when she does not see me, and afterwards talk to her of indifferent things with a warmth and fervor—Men cold and insensible like you will think all these trifles ridiculous; they are notwithstanding delicious enjoyments. But I cannot conceive why I tell you all this.

I entreat you to think better of Corsange; he is really all he appears to be; his softness and prudent reserve are the effect of his disposition and his reflections. After having been a fool, he is become wise: nothing can be more natural. Be assured, my dear uncle, that Corsange does not dissemble with me. He has no interest in doing it, and I observe him too

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strictly to make it possible. I wish you to be of my opinion when you know him, that, independently of his being the brother of a very lovely sister, he has personally much merit.

Adieu!

ST. FORLAIX.

LET-

L E T T E R VIII.

To Monf. DE PRELE, at St. Forlaix.

SIR,

I TAKE the liberty of addressing to you the complaints of an unhappy man, no action of whose life, to this very moment, has rendered him unworthy of the favors which your goodness has conferred on him. I am well acquainted, Sir, with your humanity and justice: you will never, without a cause, accuse a man whose principles of integrity and fidelity have been known to you during thirty years that he has had the honor of being in your service.

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Without having failed in that probity which I ever professed, I was yesterday driven from the house of your nephew, *Monf. De St. Forlaix*, with all the ignominy with which it had been possible to load the most infamous criminal.

He, whom I love with all the respect and attachment which I owe to every one who is connected with you! he, whose growing virtues I have contemplated with delight, and who from infancy has had time to know my manner of thinking! he has yesterday forgot all: he has not hesitated to fully forty five years of honor, by the most humiliating suspicion.

A robbery is the crime of which I am accused. I can now lose all most dear to me on earth, without fearing to experience a sorrow equal to what I have already suffered. I know not which I feel most severely, the shame of being accused of an infamous

MARQ. DE ST. FORLAIX. 37

infamous action, or the chagrin of having for my accuser the nephew of my ancient master : a young man endowed with every virtuous quality, whom I love with the utmost tenderness, and whose contempt is to me the most afflicting idea. What completes the measure of my despair, is my being obliged to quit him at the very time when I am become most necessary to him.

Monf. De St. Forlaix, by what means I am ignorant, has lost his watch : I had it from himself that I am the person he accuses. The honest shame I felt at being suspected, appeared to him a confession of guilt ; he discharged me, without giving me time to recover my confusion. A quarter of an hour has sufficed him to dishonor, without resource, him to whom you gave the appellation of the faithful Germain.

Heaven forbid I should, to justify myself, accuse others ! yet this probity, which Monf. De St. Forlaix has defamed, but
which

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which all his suspicions can never efface, obliges me to tell you, that he is too hasty and unguarded in the choice of his acquaintance. Advise him, Sir, to be more circumspect. This indiscretion may have fatal consequences, which it will be impossible to remedy. I however repeat, that I accuse nobody. As to myself, if you do not sufficiently know my heart to believe my innocence on my word, all I can say will not convince you of it.

The *faithful Germain*, Sir, has then recourse to your protection : he flatters himself you will not abandon him to the ignominy of his fate. Your past goodness has been too great, to let him suppose it will fail him in the moment when he has most occasion to implore it.

I cannot remain in a city where I have gone through so cruel a scene : do me the honor to mark out to me the place of my destination, and I will render myself there-
with.

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with all the submission which has through
his whole life devoted to your service, him,

Who has the honor to be,

&c. &c.

GERMAIN.

LET.

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L E T T E R IX.

To Monf. DE ST. FORLAIX, at Paris.

YOU are very light and very inconsiderate, Sir : a little more time and proof were, as it appears to me, necessary, to the belief that an honest man had ceased to be so. The accusing a worthy person of an infamous crime was certainly a very proper occasion for pleasantry ! It is then a point of perfect indifference to you, whether Germain is indeed a villain, or is falsely accused of being such by your levity and injustice.

Germain is an honest man ; he is so, Sir, or he would not have possessed my esteem ; a circumstance which you would have done well to consider. If your heart
is

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is so little delicate, and your judgement so little formed, as to give way to such detestable suspicions, and to communicate them to me, whom you knew they would so severely afflict, it ought not at least to have been by abusing that familiarity in which I have indulged you, but which here proceeds only from an absolute failure of respect.

Did you depend on my insensibility ? on my indifference to the common usages of society ? If you did, Sir, you have very ill understood my principles, and have very little knowledge of my heart.

I have not an extreme dependance on mankind, it is true : I regard as a misfortune a too strong attachment to them. You have made me feel strongly on this occasion how much I am in the right. If the friendship I have for you was only of that kind which I in general allow myself to feel, I should be much less sensible to
the

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the faults into which I see you fall. But though my manner of thinking is what I have often told you, I do not the less observe that consideration and respect which we owe to mankind. If it is my wish to avoid loving any particular, it is not because I have a contempt for the whole; but because I dread the not meeting with an object of my friendship who really merits to be beloved. This sentiment does not exclude that of general esteem.

I know there is little real virtue in the world: that its place is too often supplied by those prejudices which have taken its name. But this does not hinder me from believing its existence; and when, after thirty years examination, I am persuaded I have found a man who is possessed of it, it will be necessary to take a different manner of letting me know I am deceived; and above all, the fact must be rather more certain.

I think

I think I have said enough in assuring you that Germain is innocent. You do not deserve to have other proofs. This honest man has wrote to me. His affecting letter, a letter which will make you blush, has sufficiently convinced me of it. It is no great misfortune to him to be no longer with you: he would have been too much attached to you, which would have rendered him unhappy: and you are not worthy to possess such a treasure. Mons. D'Ornance, who is come to visit us, does not think it necessary for him to have any other recommendation than mine. He has given him instantly the charge of all his affairs. 'Tis a service rendered to all three. Germain is worthy of Mons. D'Ornance; and as to me, who should otherwise have been obliged to keep him, I cannot enough thank Heaven for having separated us. Circumstanced as this faithful domestic was, he would have become too dear to me. You see, Sir, that having the esteem
of

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of such a man as Monsi. D'Ornance, with mine, and that of all honest men, he can very well dispense with yours. Let us therefore say no more on the subject.

I advise you to think of your regiment; to think of it seriously, and of nothing else. I would chide you again, for my anger is not over, but I feel that I love you more than you deserve.—The tenderness I have for you obliges me still, as an affectionate relation and zealous friend, to caution you against Corfange. You will say, I speak continually to you against him; but 'tis because no action of his life speaks to me in his favor.—I stop; you will understand me if you chuse to do so: but it seems to me that Germain should not have been suspected, and that you ought not to be on the footing of intimacy you are with this young man.

Monsi. D'Ornance has confirmed me in the bad opinion I had of his son. He complains

MARQ. DE ST. FORLAIN. 45

complains much that his mother keeps him at Paris. He insists absolutely on having him with him at his estate, where his affairs will still retain him some months. I shall not be sorry he is taken from you, since you have not sufficient strength of mind to give him up. Besides, must you not part sooner or later? Death, change of circumstances, or even disgust, break at last the best-founded connexions. It is better not to contract them, or to untie the knots before they are drawn too close.

You seem to me to have scarce applied to the great men who have granted you their protection: your mother complains of this. I have sometimes done you the ill-judged service with her of attributing your negligence to your foolish passion for Mademoiselle D'Ornance; 'tis astonishing to me that this excuse should satisfy her: but it satisfies neither Mons. De l'Etang nor me. Endeavor to avoid offending us all,
and

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and be more circumspect if you wish we
should pardon you.

Adieu!

DE PRELE.

LET-

L E T T E R X.

To Madame D'ORNANCE, at Paris.

I HAVE reproaches to make you, Madam; I desired you to send me Corfange at the beginning of the winter, and I have yet heard nothing of him. I have every reason to wish him with me. He is eighteen, and passes his time with you in the most shameful inactivity. This may be pleasing to you, but it covers me with confusion. The regiment of my friend the Count De C— is in garrison at M—. My son must serve in it, and learn to acquire honor, instead of losing it as he does at present. He ought to remember, I had a mother whose weakness was equal to yours; and that I have lived in consequence of it
a mer-

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a mere illiterate country gentleman, unknown, a stranger to glory, during the thirty-eight years that I have vegetated on earth.

He shall go into winter quarters at M—; he will be near D'Ornance; I can keep a strict eye over his conduct to the moment of his departure. I shall have an opportunity of giving him such precepts as are necessary to a man who wishes to pay the debt which he owes to society. I shall particularly place before his eyes the duties of the profession to which I have destined him.

I will paint to him in the strongest colors the lazy inutility in which I have consumed my days, that he may, as far as possible, repair my error. I will tell him, that at his age I gave love the preference to honor; that I too late heard the voice of the latter, not thinking myself obliged to sacrifice the duties of a husband and father of a family to those of a citizen; that I do
not

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not repent of what I have done, but am notwithstanding convinced I might have done better. I do not wish him to imitate me.

In short, I will represent to him, that he has a double course to run, before he can attain to the glory of his ancestors, his own, and that which I have neglected.

Consider seriously, Madam, that I expect him; I have other reasons besides those I have given to wish him here. The abode of Paris is not advantageous to his health. There reigns in this seat of dissipation a contagious air of vice, pernicious to a mind weak and unformed. His infancy was stained by a pursuit as low as it was odious and criminal. His youth is a season of still greater danger, and must be watched with the utmost attention. I will myself undertake this charge. You love him too much for his well-being; I have told you so a thousand times. His confinement at

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the castle of S—, the only punishment you would allow me to inflict on him, has only put a weak bridle on his base inclinations. He has lost in forgetting his faults, that precious time he should have employed in making reparation for them.

The very eulogies you bestow on him, are with me his condemnation. Corfange is naturally impetuous: if he has a manner gentle and discreet, 'tis hypocrisy, 'tis a monster we must stifle in its birth. I have very recent cause to suspect he is not so much changed as you represent him; but I keep all the bitterness of these suspicions in my own bosom. You cannot partake them.

The young St. Forlaix is at Paris, and is desirous to grant him his friendship. I rejoice at this; let him seek it with ardor. The strongest support of a soul weak and unsteady in the road of virtue, is a fellow mind firm and virtuous, capable at once to enlighten

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enlighten and sustain it. Behold in St. Forlaix a young man who may serve for an example to all others ! He is scarce twenty-two, and his services have already merited the notice of the Government. He will soon be a Colonel, and Corsange is yet in the ignorance of a child. And yet you dare say, that our family is more noble than his, because a heap of vain parchments have moulded longer in our coffers. But his glory, Madam, his personal glory, reflects a lustre which obscures us. What is nobility, if glory itself is not ? who is the farthest advanced in the road of honor, he who has crept along it a few years more, or he who has passed it later, but with a more rapid flight ?

You say a great deal to me, Madam, in all your letters, of Corsange ; and you tell me nothing of my daughter. I beg you to consider that she is virtuous and modest, and that these qualities deserve some regard. A daughter who possesses them

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ought to be very dear to her parents. They make the glory of her sex, as splendid actions make that of men. I love my daughter, and am sensible of her worth: give me reason, Madam, to think you are not less so. Corfange, whom I impatiently expect, will bring me your answer.

I am, &c.

D'ORNANCE.

LET-

L E T T E R XI.

TO HENRIETTA DE ST. FORLAIX, at
St. Forlaix.

YOU are in the right, my dear Henrietta: dissipation is as necessary to your soul, as repose is to mine. 'Tis the privation of that only which has caused your languor. I can account for it on no other principle which is consistent with virtue, and my Henrietta is not capable of a thought which is otherwise. Since the cause is discovered, be consoled; you will probably not continue long in your retreat, or, if you do, you will become habituated to solitude: time will even render it pleasing to you. I cannot conceive how the vivacity of which you complain can give you this disgust to retreat. Your brother, who, as he himself confesses, is not less lively, avoids the world as much as you seem to desire it. He never leaves

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us. The care of soliciting a regiment is his only business, my brother his only friend, and our society his only amusement. How prudent, how polite is this young man! — I will venture to say, how amiable! (surely I may say the brother of my friend is amiable!)—My Henrietta is happy in being his sister. Corfange is still very far from resembling him.

Foolish that you are! you will insist he must love me. Do you intend to flatter me, or to confound Mons. St. Forlaix with the troop of young coxcombs who lay siege to me? If he had loved me, he would have told me so; and I should from that time have regarded him as I do the rest. He has had a thousand opportunities of speaking to me alone, and in none of them has he ever deserved to lose my esteem. It is true, he is almost always with me, that he endeavors to be near me, that he addresses his conversation to me with more apparent pleasure than to any other

other person; but there is so much decency, so much modesty, in his affectation itself; that it is impossible to suspect him of any improper design.

You will perhaps think my ideas of decorum a little severe: but consider, my dear Henrietta, that love, which was once a virtuous passion, has now so lost its original purity, that a declaration is become an insult. Women are no longer loved with any design but that of corrupting them; they are no longer addressed but for the purposes of seduction. If your brother, even supposing him to love me, should ever declare it to myself, I will never whilst I live forgive him.

But, you will say, can a man never love with honorable views? is it then necessary to proscribe that love which has marriage for its object? and if it is admitted, are not men obliged to declare it?

No, my dear friend, they are not; they are even obliged to the contrary. Is it not possible for a man who loves, without telling you he has formed the design of pleasing, to shew you those delicate attentions which cannot fail to please? will not his heart tell him when this design has succeeded? and when he is certain of it, will there not be more propriety, more respect, in asking first of your parents that consent which alone can render a declaration of this kind lawful? Let us a moment reason on the subject.

A declaration must be either passionate or cold: if cold, it will never persuade, and is therefore useless: if passionate, in what terms can a modest virgin reply to those animated expressions, those emotions, with which she inspires her lover, and which he wishes her to partake? what becomes of her if he is in this successful? These declarations are ever made without witnesses, more pressing from this circumstance:

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an ardent and skilful lover will, to express his transports, seize one moment of uninterrupted retirement. What a moment! what a dangerous image, my Henrietta! can timid innocence be blamed for being alarmed at it?

I do not know whether Mons. St. Forlaix loves me, nor do I wish to know it. He would ruin himself here by telling me so. If he loves me, my conversation will be dear to him; he will cherish those marks of confidence I cannot refuse to his merit; he will see with pleasure arise between us that soft familiarity which time will every day increase, which his respect and his virtues authorise, and which my mother permits. He must lose all this, if he confesses to me sentiments which will give importance to a thousand little circumstances which are now perfectly indifferent.

But—but—but, Henrietta—my letter is already very long, and I have yet spoke

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of nothing but your brother. I must conclude ; I am afraid I have already said too much. I entreat you only to believe he does not love me. Be as certain of it as I myself am. Do not either think that I love him. You know me too well to imagine it. But do you know why I say all this ? 'Tis because I had this foolish fancy myself : I have more than once been in terrors at the idea.

I have told you he has been with me almost every day. I have acquired insensibly a habit of seeing and conversing with him. I did not perceive it. But he passed lately one entire day without calling upon us ; that day appeared to me of an insupportable length. Nothing amused me ; all conversation appeared languid ; the airing my mother took me dull ; and I felt particularly this day how much the world displeased me. At night I slept little ; my waking thoughts, my dreams, were all of him : the circumstances were
indifferent,

indifferent, but still 'twas of him I thought, of him I dreamed. The next day, when the servant announced him, I trembled. I do not know whether this was joy, or the shame of having suffered him to employ all my thoughts. I was unable to chide him for this absence, though I had in the evening determined I would. He appeared to me more charming than usual. I even observed he was dressed with infinite taste. I blushed, and was all the day extremely embarrassed.

All this resembled extremely those symptoms of love I had heard described: I was unhappy in proportion to this resemblance: at night, retired into myself, I questioned my heart; but was dissatisfied with its answer. I made myself all the reproaches I thought I deserved. It was only the next day I was a little re-assured.

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Madame D'Eff—, widow of the late Marshal, who enjoys at court a great credit with a very bad reputation, came to pay my mother a visit: not that she is one of her chosen society; but, as the Marshal was a friend of my father's, it is impossible to avoid seeing her sometimes. She talked of Monsi. De St. Forlaix. She praised him with the enthusiasm of a woman who neglects all the decorums of her sex. She repeated ten times that he had been to visit her in bed; she entered into a minute detail of his merits, and praised especially his exterior perfections. I dared, my dear, without blushing, without being confused, without so much as lowering my eyes, to agree with her (for she addressed this conversation to me) that he was well made, of a figure uncommonly charming, and had infinite wit. I only substituted the epithet of *very amiable* to that of *adorable* which she lavished on him. Tell me, if I had loved him, could I have had so much.

MARQ. DE ST. FORLAIX. 67

much courage? 'Tis true, I felt some indignation at the Marthelet's confidence; but that is an additional reason to remove my fears. There is exquisite pleasure in hearing a man one loves praised; 'tis impossible to avoid feeling a degree of affection for those who praise him. If I had loved Monf. St. Forlaix, the exclamations of Madame D'Est— would have flattered me; instead of which, I feel that I hate her to death.

I should tell you besides, that Monf. St. Forlaix—still St. Forlaix!—Adieu! Adieu! Henrietta!

L E T.

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L E T T E R XII.

To Monf. DE PRELE, at St. Forlaix.

PARDON me, Sir, I entreat you. I must be culpable, since I have offended you. I will not even examine whether I was right or wrong. Your will alone, ever sacred to me, decides this question. Believe only, that if I have spoke to you of Germain with the familiar and innocent gaiety in which you have always had the goodness to indulge me, my intention was by that to lessen the atrociousness of the fact, and the sorrow which you could not but feel from the recital. If I was mistaken in the means,

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the end at least was laudable ; and I cannot doubt of your forgiveness.

I will believe Germain innocent, since you desire it ; but permit me to shut my eyes to all the rest. There is no conjecture so absurd which I could not prefer to suspicions equally hateful and afflicting. If I was so very culpable in accusing your valet de chambre, should I be less so in suspecting those whom honor, the rank they hold in the world, and friendship, join to render dear to me ? My esteem, you say, is not necessary to Germain : it is however necessary to me to give it without stain to those whom I love.

I am glad the man for whom you interest yourself so warmly is in Monf. D'Ornances's service : if innocent, he will there
find

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find his happiness; if guilty, shame will I hope suffice to correct him.

The family here have received a letter from Monf. D'Ornance. He has sent for Corfange : his mother, though unwillingly, has at length determined to let him go. He will be near you; he will be happy, whilst I am worthy of your compassion. He leaves us, at the latest, in fifteen days. I entreat you to regard him, not as that dissipated youth whose petulance you hated, but as one regained to virtue, as one who is my friend, and who in every respect merits to be so.

Adieu! my dear uncle! Restore to your nephew the share he once possessed of your friendship: he cannot support life without it. Alas! I have more occasion than ever
for

MARQ. DE ST. FORLAIX. 65

for your indulgence. Never was my soul so plunged in affliction. Never did I believe it possible to suffer the torments I now experience. You alone, my dearest uncle, can diminish the horror of that chagrin to which I am a prey.

Yours, &c.

ST. FORLAIX.

LET.

L E T T E R XIII.

To Monf. DE PRELLE, at St. Forlaix.

Paris.

I KNOW not how to contain myself longer, my dear uncle. I cannot wait for your answer, to confide to you all the sorrows of my heart. I must suppose you as indulgent as I desire and as I hope to find you; when you know how much my miseries demand your pity, you will not refuse it to me.

I saw Mademoiselle D'Ornance every day; satisfied with this happiness, the dread of disturbing, or perhaps losing it, preventing

venting my attempting to make it greater. It sufficed me to love, without saying to her, *I love you*: the hope of pleasing appeared to me infinitely preferable to a certainty, the desire to obtain which might possibly have offended her.

One thing only gave me disquiet. Corfange often spoke low to her in my presence. He smiled on these occasions, and her cheek was covered with blushes. Sometimes he attacked me; he sought to embarrass me for the mere pleasure of railing me on it. The more his pleasantries disconcerted me, the farther he carried them. I scarce knew what to think of all this idle trifling.

I was thinking on this subject the other morning, when Corfange entered my room.

I had

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I had never yet confessed to this friend my passion for his sister. My timidity, or, if you please, my distrust, extended even to him.

A malicious joy sparkled in his eyes. He threw his arms round my neck the moment he saw me. "Congratulate me," "my dear," said he; "my sister is going to be married."

Notwithstanding the desire I had to dissimble, I could not stand this stroke. I fell into a chair, breathless, pale, without power to utter a word.

He saw too well the impression his story had made on me, yet had the cruelty to pretend not to observe it. Without waiting for the reply which he well knew I

was

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was unable to make, he continued his relation, painting to me the extreme joy of his whole family, and especially of his sister, on this occasion: he did not spare me a single circumstance.

He even added, to complete my despair, the most flattering portrait of Julia's intended bridegroom. "I find but one defect in him," said he coldly, but looking very attentively at me, "which is an excess of dissimulation. He has loved my sister some time: he has hid it from all the world; even from me, whom he ought to have regarded as his friend, and one who wishes nothing so passionately as to serve him."

I was by no means in a state of mind to understand raillery. I comprehended nothing of all this; but my heart swelled with

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with contending passions. Almost suffocated with sighs and tears, I pressed Corfange to my bosom.

“Cruel friend,” said I: “do not finish a
“conversation which will kill me. I ought
“to have expected this misfortune. Julia
“is too adorable to remain long unknown.
“Ah! who can know her without idolizing her, without burning to possess
“her? Your unhappy friend has not been
“able to defend himself from her charms.
“I adore Julia: and, since she is destined
“to make another happy, will bid adieu to
“felicity for ever.”

Corfange started back, and expressed the utmost astonishment. “Ah! why,” said he, “why did you conceal this from
“me? did you distrust your friend? did
“you

MARQ. DE ST. FORLAIX. 71

“ you fear I should oppose your happiness? ought you not rather to have supposed I would have served you, and that nobody had the power of doing it so effectually? who can better know than a brother how to discover, how to penetrate, the heart of a sister to whom he is dear? are you ignorant how fondly my mother loves me, and what influence I have over her mind? I could have taken the first steps. Your name, your merit, would have done the rest with my father.”

I made no reply : I wept. In the midst of my tears, the word *pardon* and the name of Julia sometimes escaped me.

He pitied my condition, and embracing me very affectionately, “ I must entreat
“ your

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“ your pardon in my turn,” said he ; “ par-
“ don me, my dear friend : I am too fe-
“ verely revenged for a distrust which you
“ ought not to have had, but which I
“ ought to excuse. Julia’s marriage is a
“ mere feint, a fable I invented to try
“ your heart ; but it depends only on you
“ to make it a reality.”

I scarce listened to him ; but, without
well distinguishing the words which he said
to me, I comprehended their whole pur-
port. I pressed him in my arms : this was
all my reply ; it was expressive.

I at length recovered myself, and made
him repeat ten times what he had been
saying. Because my imagined misfortune
was not real, I thought myself at the height
of happiness. A confession of tenderness

MARQ. DE ST. FORLAIX. 73

from Julia would scarce at that moment have appeared more delicious.

Corfange told me, he was desirous to be certain of the sincerity of my passion, before he took the step he intended ; which occasioned what had just passed between us.

I confided to him, in my turn, the terms on which I was with his sister, or rather, that we were on no terms at all.

He smiled at my simplicity ; and told me, that having sounded Julia's heart, he thought he saw there sentiments very favorable to my tenderness. " But you ought," continued he, " to be assured of it by conversing with her yourself on the subject. " This will be difficult. Though you are " sometimes alone with Julia, it is not for " a length of time sufficient intirely to ex-

74 MEMOIRS OF THE

“cute this design. In spite of the cer-
 “tainty I have that my sister loves you,
 “she is not a woman to own herself con-
 “quered at the first attack. In these af-
 “fairs a declaration which is only begun, is
 “a stroke which has failed. I take on my-
 “self this care. ’Tis with this very pur-
 “pose you see me here to-day. My mo-
 “ther is gone out, my sister is in her own
 “apartment, with only her woman, whom
 “it is easy to send away. Come with me :
 “seize this occasion, lest it should never re-
 “turn.”

I followed him without replying, my heart agitated with a variety of emotions ; uncertain what to say, and even with what countenance to approach her. My perplexity redoubled as the fatal moment drew near. I could not conceive how he could
 contrive

MARQ. DE ST. FORLAIX. 75

contrive to introduce me into the apartment of Julia, where none of our sex were ever admitted. He foresaw this difficulty. He led me through his mother's apartments, and, before I perceived it, I found myself in those of his sister.

She was at her toilet, and had with her only one of her women. Her surprize at seeing us was equal to my embarrassment, but she commanded herself much more. Notwithstanding all the politeness with which she received us, her air discovered her constraint. The conversation was some moments vague and incoherent, during which Corfange designedly talked loud with Julia's woman. He soon after snatched a ribbon which she held in her hand, and ran away that she might follow him; his intention succeeded, she went out, shut the door, and I found myself alone with Julia.

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What miseries had I not experienced even to that moment ! that cruel moment rendered them a thousand times more severe : I felt them with redoubled keenness. My head was undoubtedly affected by what I suffered, since I had the rash presumption to seize one of Julia's hands, to fall at her feet, and pronounce some indistinct words, which neither she, nor even myself, could understand. She did not give me time to proceed ; she rose hastily from her seat, forced her hand from mine, cried aloud, and attempted to open the door, which Corfange held on the other side. In the midst of her efforts to escape, I heard her say with a faltering interrupted voice, " Great God ! can it be him ? him ?
 " — St. Forlaix ? — to abuse that confidence — Sir, your proceeding is unworthy — 'twas from you I ought least to
 " have

MARQ. DE ST. FORLAIX. 77

“ have expected — my brother too! —
“ Gracious Heaven! whom shall we be-
“ lieve in this world! — where then is
“ virtue to be found!”

As her cries redoubled, Corfange, who was afraid of some eclat, re-entered the room alone. Julia no sooner saw the door open, than she rushed out precipitately, without having force even to utter a reproach, except by an indignant glance which she darted at her brother.

During this scene, I remained in the same posture, without speaking a word, or breathing a sigh, insensible to every thing; so awed, so struck, was I by her behaviour.

Corfange roused me from this lethargic state. “ Let us go,” said he, taking me by the arm.

E 3

Scarce

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Scarce were we in the street, when he added, in that tone of anger which friendship inspires and authorises, " You are too inexpert ; your heart is too insensible, too weak, to deserve that others should interest themselves in what concerns you."

" What ought I then to do?" said I, wildly raising to Heaven my eyes, which were still unable to shed tears.

" You ought," said he with fury, " since you pretend to a passion for Julia, to have such an one as merits the name. The man who truly loves is not weak and timid as you have been. Renounce all hope of success, since you have not endeavored to take advantage of the only opportunity you will ever have. Expect
" no.

“no farther services from me. I abandon you.”

I made no answer to this discourse, which I attributed to the disorder into which the scene he had just been a witness of had thrown him. He refused to accompany me home: yet never had I so much occasion for a friend. Never had I been so wretched, so lost, as at this moment. I looked, without seeing the objects on which my eyes were fixed; I ran, without knowing whither or why. I lost in my confusion a very beautiful gold snuff-box I had lately purchased: I was not in a situation to regret a loss like that. At length my tears forced a passage; they flowed in abundance, and I found myself a little relieved.

I have told you, Sir, my distress. I have not dared since to return to the house
 E 4 of

80 MEMOIRS OF THE
of Madame D'Ornance. How could I
support the looks of her offended daughter?
yet what will become of me, if I do not
see her?—My dearest uncle, advise me; do
not you too abandon me. Instruct me in
the means of repairing my fault. Alas!
my fault is much less the timidity with
which Corsange reproaches me, than the
too great presumption with which I re-
proach myself.

Adieu!

ST. FORLAIX.

LET-

MARQ. DE ST. FORLAIX. 81

L E T T E R XIV.

TO HENRIETTA DE ST. FORLAIX, at
St. Forlaix.

Paris.

A H! If I had loved him, my dear Henrietta, what would have become of me!—It is very painful to me to think your brother is no longer distinguishable from other men; or rather that he is the most criminal of them all. Read this letter, and judge if I am to blame in complaining.

Ever attentive, ever respectful in his behaviour to me, Mons. St. Forlaix never

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even by a look acted inconsistently with his character. Some indiscreet pleasantries of Corfange, when we were together, far from encouraging, only seemed to embarrass him. If he had really loved me, I will tell you, my Henrietta, confess, he would have gained my whole soul by the delicate propriety of this conduct. Could I have expected he would so soon have deserved to lose both my tenderness and esteem?

It is now four days since what I am going to relate happened. My mother was gone out; I was indisposed, and could not accompany her. One only of my women was with me. I was indulging myself in the pleasure of thinking of St. Forlaix. I considered his behaviour and that of all the other young men I was acquainted with. All the advantage of the comparison was on

MARQ. DE ST. FORLAIX. 83.

on his side; in this preference I fancied I did no more than justice.

At that very instant he entered my chamber, by a door which communicates with my mother's apartments. He was followed by my perfidious brother. This visit, so little expected, extremely astonished me.

I could not have supposed that the respectful St. Forlaix, who had never presumed to enter my apartment but with my mother, would have come thither with only my brother for his guide, and with the caution and privacy of a robber.

This air of mystery, this improper confidence of behaviour, already displeased me. My embarrassment plainly told all which passed in my heart. I was going to ex-

press my anger, when my woman, who was without doubt instructed by my brother, left the room with him.

My surprize was increased, and my indignation raised to the highest pitch, by seeing St. Forlaix at my feet. He seized my hand, and uttered some incoherent words of which I did not understand the purport. I rose. I called for aid. I attempted to fly: the door was held fast on the outside: it gave way at length to my repeated efforts; and I saw Corfange who held it, and who entered the room at the instant I escaped. My woman had before disappeared.

Since that time I have never seen your brother, who certainly does not dare to appear before me.

Ah!

Ah! my dear Henrietta! what are we then to think of men! Let us judge of all by him who appeared the best. Great God! him! St. Forlaix! to chuse, amongst the various means of displeasing me, the most criminal, and that which outraged most the blushing modesty of our sex!

Could he? is it then possible? could he be so contemptible a wretch, as to imagine the moment in which his behaviour justly irritated me against him, the most proper to seduce me? or did he know me so little, as to think I should see in the insult offered to my honor, only a sudden emotion which passion rendered pardonable!

Sometimes, when my too indulgent soul endeavors, not to excuse, that is impossible,
but

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but to lessen in some degree the atrociousness of his guilt, I represent to myself how much greater is my brother's share than his in a crime so degrading to both. I paint to my imagination the air of timidity and shame with which St. Forlaix addressed me, whilst the most daring effrontery lighted up the whole countenance of Corsange. He was unable to speak to me, at least what he said was inarticulate. When I attempted to fly, he did not oppose my flight. I did not even observe that he quitted the posture he had at first taken.

It is, besides, to the last degree improbable that he would of himself have either concerted or attempted to execute an enterprize so insolent, so offensive to honor. But is he the less guilty? if my brother's

MARQ. DE ST. FORLAIX. 87

counfels were criminal, ought he to have listened to, and followed them?

In short, if he loved me, was it my brother or me he should have endeavored to please? I repeat it, my dear Henrietta, and it is a truth of which it is necessary for my peace I should be convinced, your brother is only on a level with the rest of his sex.

Mine has had the audacity to meet my looks unabashed. He has opposed only raillery to my reproaches. He accuses me of dissimulation. The manner in which I have taken their unworthy procedure, is, according to him, only a caprice. I love St. Forlaix. A moment sooner or later would have crowned his vows with success.

Q!

O! my friend! you will soon see this brother. Beware of his exterior graces, of his seducing address, of a form, if possible, more bewitchingly charming than that of St. Forlaix himself. But the latter is only inconsiderate; the heart of Corfange is much more corrupted.

Excuse this language, my dear Henrietta; it is not indeed that of a sister, who ought to shut her eyes on the errors of a brother; but it is that of a friend, who loves you, who sees the dangers which threaten you, and who wishes to prevent them, by letting you into his true character.

Adieu! Pardon me this melancholy letter. It afflicts my heart more than it can mortify yours. Whoever has formed a favorable idea of another, will find it

MARQ. DE ST. FORLAIX. 89
it very painful to be obliged to retract
it.

Once more, adieu !

Yours,

JULIA.

LET-

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L E T T E R XV.

To Monf. ST. FORLAIX, at Paris.

St. Forlaix.

TIS pleasant enough that you should ask *my* sentiments on the best manner of conducting a love affair: you well know, the only advice I shall give you is not to love at all. These then are your terrible afflictions? Your first letter put me into an inconceivable fright. I could conjecture nothing less than the loss of all your expectations at court. But the evil is not quite so great as I apprehended. On the contrary, you will make your way much more easily when you are no longer
in.

MARQ. DE ST. FORLAIX. 91
in the fetters of the divine Julia. So she is violently enraged at your having presumed to tell her she was amiable? This is really a very crying sin. It must however be confessed, to do her justice, that you did not take the most respectful method of giving her this information.

You make your friend M^{on}s^{ieur}. Corfange's court to me admirably. Truly, a very estimable youth this, who privately introduces a man into his sister's chamber, and holds the door on the other side! It is not necessary to be as much a prude as Mademoiselle D'Ornance, to think this a very extraordinary proceeding.

What could possibly influence you to follow this giddy coxcomb's advice? A very fine preceptor you have made choice of, upon my word! I am very sorry for all

all this ; but I see no remedy. Mademoiselle Julia, who cannot fail of having in their full extent all the prejudices of decorum, will never pardon you such an imprudence. You ought not ever to expect it. Madame D'Ornance, who will undoubtedly be informed of this agreeable adventure, can never again admit within her doors a man who has attempted no less than to dishonor her family. You are then absolutely disgraced. As to this little Corsange, he will be parted from you for ever, for which I most devoutly thank Heaven. What part is then left you to take ? I see none, but changing the object, and attaching yourself entirely to Madame D'Eff—.

Yes, indeed, 'tis a charming conquest, and cannot fail of flattering you extremely. A woman who has taken her degrees,
with

with whom 'tis impossible you should not be a gainer in the article of instruction ; a woman who has regiments to bestow, and who (I beg your pardon) is not a scolding termagant like Mademoiselle Julia ! I cannot conceive for my part what should make you balance a moment. She has the best heart in the world. I am very sure, if you had had the insolence to intrude on her in the same manner you did on Mademoiselle D'Ornance, even if in the middle of the night, so far from crying out like this foolish girl, she would have pardoned you in an instant.

I don't however advise you to a step of this nature ; it has succeeded very ill with you once, and there is no great harm in that : but this would be a much more dangerous experiment, if we may believe the Duke of B—, and he should know. This
is,

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is, however, no jesting affair : you must be a Colonel, even if you are obliged to change the valet de chambre who dresses your hair.

How ridiculous is this poor world ! where then shall we find amongst all this crowd of impertinents one who merits to be beloved ?

I shall be careful not to let your mother see your letter : she would never forgive your having by your own fault broke with this family. You must invent some pretence of quarrel to tell her.

Your sister has been ill some time, of a complaint which has the appearance of a consumption ; she is in a visible decay ; nobody seems to know the cause. As to me, I think I divine it, but I meet'with no credit

MARQ. DE ST. FORLAIX. 95

credit. I could wish that little Corsange was not to be allowed to visit here, when he becomes our neighbor. But I despair of succeeding in this. The question has already been debated amongst us; it came on the other day at table. I fought warmly for the negative; but your mother insisted, his acquaintance would do us great honor. Monf. De l'Etang gave us his pedigree, as a conclusive argument. The point was carried against me, and I was silent. God send no harm may happen from this resolution!

Adieu!

Your affectionate

DE PRELÉ.

LET-

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L E T T E R XVI.

To JULIA D'ORNANCE, at Paris.

St. Forlaix.

YOU were always modest and virtuous, my Julia ; but I begin to fear that very modesty and virtue, carried to excess, may degenerate into a ridiculous prudery. Perhaps the eager desire I have to see our friendship cemented by the ties of blood, may in some degree influence my judgement ; but to me, this imprudent action of my brother, which to you appears so unpardonable an outrage, does not seem so criminal — not so very criminal !

I told

I told you he loved you; it could not be otherwise: you see, my dear, I was not mistaken. Would you have him sigh eternally, without ever daring to tell you his passion? My dear friend, you should be just: it is right to have such sentiments as are in nature, and not to give way to exaggerated and chimerical ideas.

From the moment he loved you, he of course wished to obtain you. Would you wish him to have had so little delicacy as to be satisfied with owing that happiness to your filial obedience alone? and how could he be certain of your real sentiments in respect to him by any person except yourself? You wished he should endeavor to please you without telling you he had that design: he has done this; and it is only since he had reason to hope he

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an unworthy behaviour, to lose the pleasing
hope of obtaining us ?

These reasons ought to apologize sufficiently for the means St. Forlaix made use of to declare his tenderness, and of consequence to justify Mons. Corfange who procured them. You will, I am sure, agree with me, that it is necessary to be alone in such moments: how is it otherwise possible to succeed ? could he, in presence of your mother, or indeed of any other person, have painted to you in proper terms the violence of his passion ? Be reasonable, Julia ; you have done enough to maintain the dignity of your character: you will have credit for as much virtue as you please. You ought now to forgive my brother, and to cease thinking your own so very culpable.

I have

I have seen this dangerous Monf. Corfange; my Julia, I have seen him. He was fo polite as to pay us a vifit the day after his arrival. We converfed a long time together, becaufe I had a thoufand questions to ask him about you. I took care, however, not to mention St. Forlaix's paffion for you.—I confeß, my dear, he appeared to me charming. What sweetness in his air, in his countenance, in his very looks! what grace in his whole form! I was on my guard againft him notwithstanding; you told me it was neceffary, and I ought to believe you. But might you not be a little peevifh, a little out of humor with him, when you wrote that letter? Nature muft indeed have given him a deceitful exterior if he is not the moft amiable of mankind.

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Shall I tell you, my Julia? Yes; I shall blush to own my folly: but you know me so sincere, that I am unable to disguise even those sentiments which appear to myself the least pardonable. To you I will confess all my weakness,

Yes, my dear, Corfange, your too lovely brother, seemed to me, the first moment I beheld him, to determine at once the true object of my long inquietudes. My restless wishes did not indeed directly point him out as their object, they did not instantly direct themselves to him; but I was not the less sensible at his sight, that my heart had still a void, and that this void would soon be filled. I felt that love alone could adorn my solitude, and conceal from me all its horrors. It is necessary to the
happiness

happiness of my life. I had almost said, to my very existence.

But do not, my Julia, believe my *senses* have any share in this desire. Its source is in the faculties of my soul, which formed for dissipation and attachment, seeks the element congenial to them.

Perhaps the world would to me supply the place of a lover; but of this I am certain, that a lover will to me supply the place of the world.

Monf. Corfange made me sensible of all this without perceiving it, and even without my having perceived it myself. It was only in consequence of the train of reflections into which his conversation led me, that I discovered there was yet wanting an object to my heart, to satisfy its ardent sensibility.

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bility. You will not allow that this object shall be your brother. Be it so. But I confess I should not be sorry there was a resemblance.

Adieu!

Yours,

HENRIETTA.

LET.

L E T T E R XVII.

To Monf. DE PRELE, at St. Forlaix.

Paris.

AH! my God! my dear uncle! with what blasphemies have you darkened your letter! my Julia a prude! a — But I must forgive all this to *you*. You are an infidel. You regard love as a vain idol; and his enemies are generally very irreverent to beauty.

As to me, faithfully submissive to his worship, an exact observer of his laws, if I have committed a fault against him, I have repaired it: he will soon pardon me;

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at least, I have reason to hope it. Iniquity has not grown old on my head, as it has on yours. This gentle deity knows how to distinguish the light offences of the head, from the cold insensible apathy of the heart.

The day before he left Paris, Corfange came to me from his mother: she was astonished at my long absence, which she attributed to indisposition. She invited me to dine. It was necessary to accept her invitation, or to break with her. All the embarrassment, all the constraint I must necessarily feel, all the reproaches I had to dread from the eyes of Julia, were insufficient to make me hesitate a moment.

I promised Corfange to be there. He seemed enchanted with my resolution. He asked me repeatedly pardon for having
been

been so long without seeing me. He was afraid I should have reproached him with my bad success, of which he was the innocent cause. I embraced him, which was all my reply.

I went then to dine with Madame D'Ornance. I took advantage of the idea she had of the cause of my absence. I pretended to have been ill. She chid me for not having let her know it, and discovered I was greatly altered by my sickness. It was necessary to make the usual compliments to Julia. I stammered them out with a confusion from which I could not recover. She replied with all the clearness, all the politeness, all the facility and freedom, which coldness and indifference could give.

My soul was pierced with this reception. I had expected another, not indeed less ter-

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rible ; but of which the effect on me, though more lively, would have been less bitter.

My eyes were filled with tears. She perceived it ; and I know not why, but she left the room that instant. I flattered myself I should find in the afternoon an opportunity to speak to her, to give up for ever all hope, or to obtain my pardon without reserve ; but Madame D'Eff—, that cruel Marshalefs, who was one of the company at dinner, deprived me of all possibility of addressing her. She continued loading me with caresses which were odious to me ; and, as if she wished to empoison her benefits, she took the very moment when she tore my soul in pieces to inform me a regiment of horse was vacant, that she was going to try every means in her power, and did not doubt of obtaining it for me.

I observed

I observed my Julia disconcerted at these words. She this time only addressed her conversation to me, to exhort me to lose not a moment in taking all the necessary steps to succeed in this pursuit.

There was a certain air of concern and uneasiness in her manner when she said this, of which I could not divine the cause. Judge whether I could love Madame D'Eff—, who prevented me from enquiring.

But I must tell you all she did to attach me to her. During coffee, whilst the company were intent on pursuing the conversation which had commenced at dinner, she took me aside: "My good friend," said she, "I interest myself warmly in your happiness; there is a little girl here,
" who

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L E T T E R XVIII.

TO JULIA ST. FORLAIX, at St. Forlaix.

AH! my Julia! I have again seen the heavens without a cloud. The verdure of our meads and forests has resumed all its lustre. My solitude is no longer a barren desert; 'tis a blooming garden, which appears every hour more charming to my eyes. Love has withdrawn the curtain which hid from me all the beauties of nature.

My mother, and my grandfather De l'Etang, who think as I do in respect to Monf. Corfange, that is, who think him
enchanted,

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enchanted, have invited him to spend all the time he possibly can with us, before he leaves D'Ornance for M—, where he is to enter into the service. He is here almost every day. He never quits me a moment. His every look, his every action, tell me he loves; and I hear him with the most lively pleasure. There is not a word said in conversation that he does not contrive to turn into a compliment which he addresses to me. When the company load him with praises, and with the most flattering expressions of esteem, he seems to receive them only to offer them up to me, and to value them only as ornaments which may render him more pleasing in my eyes.

If my soul was tremblingly sensible to this silent language, how was it possible it should either feel, or feign, anger, when a declaration became real?

Yesterday,

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Yesterday, my Julia; yesterday these divine words, *I love you*, were pronounced to me with all the transports of the most ardent tenderness: mine was inflamed by it. If I did not deliver myself to all the joy with which it inspired me, I could not however dissemble it entirely. I had regarded love as the first happiness of human life. It approached me: could I reject what appeared to me so desirable?

We walked in the little wood after dinner. Monf. De l'Etang, who walks with great difficulty, staid within: Monf. De Prele gave his hand to my mother; and, what was very natural, Corfange gave me his. My uncle and my mother disputed on something, as it appeared to us, with great heat. This vivacity carried them, without perceiving it, to a great distance
from

MARQ. DE ST. FORLAIX. 115

from us. We thought it improper, as they seemed to hurry purposely from us, to hasten our pace, to overtake them.

We were therefore soon alone. Corfange seized that favorable moment to say to me — what did he not say? He lavished the most tender expressions, to paint to me sentiments still more tender. He took my hand, he kissed it with ardor, and by the softest sensations awakened in my soul all the fire with which he wished to inspire me. What vows of eternal adoration! with what animated candor did he pronounce them! how certain he seemed of persuading — and how little did he in that deceive himself! If he could betray those vows, he must be the most base, the most cruel of mankind! But far from me these dark these gloomy ideas! Let them

no-

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not carry poison into the bosom of my happiness.

What did I reply to all he said to me? Alas! I am ignorant. All I know is, that the strictest virtue could reproach me with nothing, and that Corfange did not complain of my rigor. I therefore certainly answered as both my heart and my duty dictated. His views are honorable; why should they then offend me? From not being offended, is it so great a transition to being charmed with them? I do not however believe I told him I loved him—but even if I had—I did not however pronounce the word *love*.

I only remember that he asked me with the most persuasive earnestness of manner—the pleasure of hearing him, the pain I felt

MARQ. DE ST. FORLAIX. 117

felt at hiding from him my sentiments, all conspired to excite the most violent conflicts in my soul.—In those moments of lively agitation, who can be perfectly mistress of herself?—the disorder of the mind imperceptibly communicates itself to the senses.—Thus, whilst he a thousand times repeated a question so pleasing to me to hear, I felt my hand, which he held, press his—his transports first made me sensible of an error of which I was not intentionally guilty. He took for a consenting reply what was in me an involuntary emotion—I swear to you, my Julia, it was not my intention—I entreat you to believe me—if I was in any respect blameable, it was in not instantly undeceiving him. I thought of this afterwards, but it was too late. I had not even sufficient strength of mind to repent of this indiscretion.

O!

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O! my dear friend! what a delicious night followed this happy day! in what a sweet delirium did it pass! In short, I love, I am beloved. Behold all which my agitated heart desired. It was the unknown aim of all my wishes. — Excuse these unguarded confessions. I have already said, I know not how to carry the scrupulous excess of modesty you practise, into the confidential effusions of my soul. It feels strongly, and expresses itself in the same manner. I fancy I double my pleasures in recounting them to you.

Have you pardoned our brothers? How do I wish to see you inspired with sentiments similar to those I experience! That circumstance would much increase my happiness.

Adieu!

HENRIETTA.

L E T-

MARQ. DE ST. FORLAIX. 119

L E T T E R XIX.

To Monf. DE PRELE, at St. Forlaix.

Paris.

MADAME D'EFF— went yesterday to Choisi, my dear uncle. She goes to solicit in my behalf a regiment now vacant. She is certain of obtaining it. All the friends who interest themselves for me, are gone to join her in this request; therefore be perfectly tranquil in regard to my fate. Success in this point will be a kind of passport, and intitle me to talk to you on what you call my folly, but what I regard as the first happiness of my life.

I could not see Mademoiselle D'Ornance the day I hoped I should. I was obliged

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to wait till yesterday for the interesting moment of finding her alone.

Her mother was indisposed. She appeared overwhelmed with sorrow. Her grief was communicated to all around her. The tender Julia could not fail of partaking the sentiments of her mother. I had myself very little reason to be gay. Every thing therefore contributed to heighten the gloominess of the scene; a circumstance by which I could not avoid being a gainer.

The pensive calm, the broken interrupted sentences, the low faltering voice, of affliction, leave in the soul a certain languor which extremely inclines it to tenderness.

Anger is a quick animated sentiment, and can never inhabit the mind at the same moment with sadness. This was
the

the situation in which I wished to find Mademoiselle D'Ornance, and the very situation in which this concurrence of accidents had placed her.

Another propitious circumstance joined these. Corfange was the subject of conversation at dinner. His mother was inconsolable at his absence, which I believe was the real source of all her distress. Julia also spoke of him with infinite regret. You will judge how very favorable this regret was to me.

Madame D'Ornance gave that day to Julia all those marks of tenderness she was accustomed to lavish on her son. Julia discovered the most lively gratitude; another sensation which favored my hopes of pardon. The interior joy she felt at caresses which were so new to her, left no

room in her soul for any sentiment of displeasure. When we are happy, the heart is naturally disposed to indulgence.

Madame D'Ornance wished to be alone. She desired us to walk a little in the garden. I saw confusion and embarrassment in the lovely eyes of Julia. I knew not what to preface. I gazed upon her, pale, trembling, expecting her consent or refusal as the sentence on which my life or death depended. She looked at me also, she blushed. An involuntary, and almost imperceptible, smile appeared one moment on her lips. The serious countenance of indifference soon took its place. But this charming smile had already said all. It had carried the softest impression of joy into my heart, and this joy was not effaced like that.

Julia

Julia accepted my hand. Under what pretence indeed could she have refused it before her mother, who was ignorant of our quarrel? Her inattentive air, which I could not avoid remarking, inquieted me greatly. My embarrassment was as long as it was cruel. We had already made several turns up and down the walk in which we were, without either of us having uttered a single word.

I first broke this painful silence. It was by saying the most indifferent things that can be imagined. Whilst I had continued silent, a prey to a thousand contradictory sensations, my heart had been more agitated than affected, more tormented than softened. The few words I had pronounced, however indifferent and foreign to my feelings, had given it a new tendency. My

voice faltered, and, expiring on my lips, formed only inarticulate sounds. All the various sentiments which agonized me, meeting at once in my bosom, were unable, though labouring for utterance, to convey any more determinate idea, than that my soul was torn by the most bitter and exquisite anguish.

My eyes were at length filled with tears, and my sighs, in spite of me, converted into groans which shook my bosom. I stopped, I cast down my eyes, not daring either to look at Julia, or suffer her to observe the painful state of my mind. She stopped also, kept me some time in this situation, seemed to examine me with attention, and then seated herself. This circumstance enabled me to see her without raising my eyes. I directed them towards her. Through the tears which obscured them, I saw she
still

still observed me. Her look was neither that of tenderness, of anger, of contempt, or of compassion. It was only serious, it was only that of reason. I seated myself at her side.

“ Why do you weep ? ”

It was Julia who spoke, and who asked me this question, with an air firm, tranquil, yet soft. The sound of her voice compleatly penetrated my soul. A sudden and violent transport carried me away. I seized one of her hands with all the avidity of passion — but, as if it had been a profanation, I stopped, I withdrew mine instantly with all that respect which one has for things sacred ; the hand of Julia was not however withdrawn.

I believe she smiled also at my attempt and my embarrassment. She added,

ded, with an air still more soft than the first time,

“ Will you not tell me why you weep ?”

“ I weep because I am guilty, because I
“ have offended you.”

I threw myself at her feet, not with the ardor, the presumptuous eagerness, of a daring lover, who aims to impassion and seduce by the false exterior of submission ; but with the respectful humility of a criminal, who solicits his pardon, whilst he acknowledges himself unworthy to obtain it.

Whatever was the motive of this posture, it seemed to displease her.

“ These transports are very familiar to
“ you !” said she, in an ironical tone ;
“ ’tis

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“ ’tis easy to see you are accustomed to
“ them!—But I entreat you to reserve
“ them for others, and to leave off this
“ habit with me.”

I suffered her to go on without interruption, into such confusion had she thrown me. I had risen at her first words.

“ O! Julia! in what a manner do you
“ judge of me!”

This was all I was able to reply. She made me seat myself, and went on:

“ Endeavor to moderate yourself, to
“ forget neither what you owe to yourself
“ or me, and to hear me with attention.”

She afterwards continued:

" It is so common to tell a woman she is
 " beloyed, that it is no longer either an out-
 " rage to her virtue, or an avowed de-
 " sign on her heart. It is only a fashion-
 " able style, in which every man thinks
 " himself obliged to address us. With
 " great unwillingness, and to avoid the
 " charge of singularity, I have brought
 " myself to conform to this ridiculous
 " custom. There is however one step
 " farther, to which I shall never accustom
 " myself, which is to hear these frivolous
 " and unmeaning expressions from the
 " mouth of a man whom I had before
 " thought estimable. I will not add to
 " how much greater a degree I am
 " shocked, to see him employ means of
 " pleasing still more unworthy. I have
 " parents. If any one pretends to me,
 " 'tis of them he must demand me. I am
 " not my own mistress.

" If

“ If he wishes to engage my heart, I
“ know well that depends on me alone;
“ but it is to my mother I will give an
“ account of my sentiments, and not to a
“ passionate lover, whose ardor expects an
“ answer almost before he asks a question.

“ Let us speak with the utmost open-
“ ness of heart. If I was weak enough to
“ enter into an engagement without the
“ consent of my parents, what would be-
“ come of me, if they refused to confirm
“ it? It is however to this misfortune, that
“ the false delicacy of men exposes us.
“ My mother will never constrain me in
“ my choice; but this means no more than
“ that she will not force me to accept a
“ man who is displeasing to me, and not
“ that she will consent implicitly to my
“ union with him whom my heart might
“ chuse.

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“ Monf. St. Forlaix, obferve attentively
“ what I am going to fay. When coxcombs
“ talk to me of love, they excite my laugh-
“ ter ; when men who appear more folid
“ have this temerity, they offend me. I
“ fhall ever be filent to all they can fay,
“ till they have obtained what alone can
“ induce me to liften to them. There is
“ but one means to engage my attention,
“ and I have already told it you.

“ This is the only converfation I will
“ ever allow myfelf to hold on the fubject of
“ love : but I thought it neceffary. You
“ have rendered yourfelf culpable towards
“ me ; fo much the more culpable, in pro-
“ portion to the fhare you poffeffed in my
“ efteem. Endeavor to regain what you
“ have loft, if it is fufficiently pleafing to
“ you to make you defire it. If your re-
“ pentance is as lively as it appears to be,
“ it

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“ it may excite compassion ; but you will
“ only have inspired me with a very use-
“ less pity, if you do not repair your fault.
“ To repair it, you must see me no more—”

I did not give her leave to finish the sentence—

“ See you no more, Julia ?” said I.
“ Too certain of being obeyed, what is it
“ you command me ? Ah ! what will
“ become of me, if driven from you ?—
“ No, Mademoiselle, I cannot. The step
“ which, in spite of myself, I presumed to
“ take, was unworthy of you ; I am but
“ too sensible of it. But, however blame-
“ able, it has fully instructed you in the state
“ of my heart. You know, I repeat it,
“ you know that I adore you—”

She interrupted me in her turn :

“ You have very ill understood me,” said she, rising from her seat, and assuming an air and manner the most serious that can be conceived; “ or, if you have understood me, you pay very little regard to what I say to you. Since you force me to explain myself more clearly, I meant to tell you, that whilst you and I are circumstanced as we are at present, this conversation is the last of this nature we must hold. I have only one word to add; what I have been saying to you, I would not have said to any man on earth but yourself.”

We returned immediately into the house, without her having either spoke to me, or heard a word of what I attempted to say. I scarce comprehend her, so much do I fear I should mistake her meaning.—But
 'tis

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'tis no matter; some circumstances you have mentioned in your letters, others which I have divined; a little hope on one side, and even fear on the other; all contribute to encourage me.—But you shall know my design only by its good or bad success.

Adieu! my dear uncle! Soften the severity of your brow a little, to pity me. I merit the compassion of the most insensible man existing,

L E T

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L E T T E R XX.

TO HENRIETTA DE ST. FORLAIX, at
St. Forlaix.

Paris.

I HAVE spoken, my dear Henrietta; and the ingrate has not understood me. Modesty threw her veil over my discourse; and though it was very transparent, he distinguished nothing through it. He does not then love.—And if he does not, why should that affect me?—And yet—I believe—I fear—I should be very sorry to be convinced of his indifference.

One thing is very singular, that if he had made me a declaration in the common forms,

forms, as it would have offended me only moderately, his repentance would also have been weak, and I should have been little affected by it. But because his offence was extreme, and my anger and his repentance of course the same, must my pity be proportionably great? I believe, however, my Henrietta, this has been the consequence.

How interesting was he, when he threw himself at my feet in the garden! and I—foolish girl! I blush to say—and yet I ought to confess it—the only uneasiness I felt was, the fear of being surprized. He wept. How dear to me were those tears! how strongly did they excite my compassion!—Is it because I indeed love him?

O! my dear Henrietta! I experienced in that moment how dangerous it is to be alone

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alone with a man—whom one loves, I ought to have said, or at least whom one is on the point of loving. How near was I letting him see my weakness!—I could never to the end of life have forgiven myself; I should never again have seen him; and all this would have been his own work.

My heart was agitated by these conflicts, these struggles between contradictory sentiments, all the time he was speaking. Never did he appear to me more charming than at that moment. Never did I observe him with such attention. Every sigh, every groan, every tear, made the most forcible impression on my heart. I was more touched by his repentance, than I had been by his fault. Alas! because I suffered nothing of all this to appear, he, cruel as he is, did not divine the soft sensations which passed in my soul.

I had

I had said to him, " That whilst circumstances continued as they were between us, we must have no more conversations together." He did not discover that this was meant to express, " Speak to my mother, and circumstances will be changed."

I had added, " That I would not have said so much to any other man."

The insensible did not perceive, that this preference nearly approached to love.

I have weighed all that has passed, my dear friend ; and my conclusion is, that since he has not understood me, he must have very little love. From this time, therefore, he ought to be perfectly indifferent to me,

As

As I do not absolutely love him, I shall soon conquer this ill-placed partiality. Of one point I am above all however certain, that nothing shall ever induce me to explain myself more explicitly. I am, on the contrary, persuaded that I have already said too much. Let us therefore leave this, and begin another subject.

You alarm me, my Henrietta: the violent passion my brother has conceived for you, and the too lively and too sudden interest you seem to take in it, do not allow me to regard with a very tranquil eye the future fate of the friend of my soul. I am tenderly apprehensive for your happiness; I tremble lest your choice should be unworthy of you. Be on your guard against him, my dear, if you have yet left sufficient resolution.

But

But perhaps I am too much alarmed. A heart which burns for you must be pure; or, if otherwise, that flame which has you for its object cannot fail to purify it. You will not be a long time together. Absence will enable you to see him such as he really is.

If it is possible, my dear Henrietta, endeavor to work a miracle on his soul: 'tis for you this work is reserved. How happy should I be, if the ties of friendship, which unite us should be drawn still closer by adding those of blood!—I mean only by your marriage with Corfange; we must not entertain a thought of any other.

Adieu! my dear Henrietta! Burn this letter. I would not be exposed to any eyes but yours.

JULIA.

P. S.

P. S. Ah! my dear friend! He has been here two hours, and I knew nothing of it. He, who never passed a quarter of an hour in this house without asking to see me. He has been here. He has been conversing two hours with my mother. He darted cross the apartments like a flash of lightening, without even stopping to enquire after my health. How false are all men!— Could he?— could the man whom I almost loved?— Yes, my dearest, I loved him — I indeed loved him, I must take on myself all the shame, that I may be the sooner cured of this mistaken tenderness.

Adieu!

L E T.

MARQ. DE ST. FORLAIX. 141

L E T T E R XXI.

To Monf. ST. FORLAIX, at Paris.

St. Forlaix.

I HEARTILY wish you to speak of your regiment. You seem to make it only a secondary affair. I own, I desire to see you a Colonel, at least as warmly as Madame D'Eff—: as to seeing you married, that is another affair. In your next, you may reserve the details of your tender passion for the appendix: it would there be in its place.

I know not how you, or how she, have brought it about, but your Julia interests
me

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me extremely. That perfect regularity of conduct, that modesty, nay that very prudence itself, all those qualities which are in her merely the effect of prejudice, have notwithstanding something in them of endearing, of respectable, of uncommon, which I feel, but cannot define.

I could wish she owed these virtues to reasoning and philosophy; but I confess that is too extraordinary to be expected.

Do not be astonished at my thinking in this manner. I wish mankind had no prejudices; but if they have them at all, I wish them to be honest ones. Virtue has the strongest power over my heart; a power the greater in proportion to the ideal standard I have fixed of her purity and perfection.

You

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You have seen me laugh at those pretended virtues, those virtues of affectation, which the world so emphatically praise; but those which are simple, modest, sincere, never fail to draw tears from my eyes.

I should be glad to see Mademoiselle Julia nearer, to know whether she would make me laugh or weep.

I may not perhaps wait long to satisfy this desire. My steward has wrote me word, my house at Paris wants reparations. I intend to come and overlook them myself. I expected Mons. D'Ornance would have accompanied me: but, though his affairs are finished, the care of his son's conduct, to which he is determined to give very particular attention, will keep him some time longer at his estate. I must therefore come alone.

I shall

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I shall now see this divine beauty, whose sentiments are also so divine. I make no doubt but you embellish all her fine qualities to me. I know young women, especially those of Paris; which is the reason I never loved them.

But pray tell me, have you yet thrown yourself at the feet of Madame D'Eff—, as you did at those of Julia, who discovered this mode of address was habitual to you? Such an action would, I am certain, have appeared to her charming. Nothing would there have succeeded so well. Why should Julia have been so offended? does any thing shew more humility than this posture? I own, however, 'tis a respectful attitude in which we are apt to fail of respect to women.

But

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But this project which I am to know only by its success, and this regiment which is to come from Versailles? when is all this to arrive?

Adieu!

DE PRELE.

VOL. I.

H

LET.

L E T T E R XXII.

TO JULIA D'ORNANCE, at Paris.

St. Forlaix.

IT is too late, my Julia: my heart is already given: all your advice and all your fears are useless. The malady, if it is one, is already fixed. It is incurable. I must no longer think of healing, but of flattering it. I have said every thing to Corfange: he knows that I adore him. With what transport did I receive the homage of his tenderness! He did not feel less in hearing the confession of mine. I had not the inhumanity to let him expect it long.

Corfange

Corfange seems to idolize me as much as I love him. If he deceives me, I shall be without doubt unfortunate: but can I regret the loss of a happiness which I could have tasted with no other than him? Besides, whilst the veil of error covers my eyes, is there on earth a felicity which equals mine? If it falls, my wretchedness will be the shorter in proportion to its being more exquisite.

The rapid and violent pace of misfortune is preferable to the slow, the heavy, the tedious step of indifference. In the short road which leads to the tomb, shall we not mix with some moments of felicity the miseries which empoison it?

But what fatal, what gloomy ideas! Corfange will never betray me: his soul is

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incapable of deceit. Why then do you all judge of him with such harshness? How cruel are these prejudices! His natural vivacity alarmed you in his infancy. Some trifling faults, for which his age, the age of vanity and indiscretion, ought to have served as an excuse, appeared to you vices inherent in his nature. Alas! you have punished them with sufficient severity. Are you not satisfied with that privation of liberty which he so long suffered? He has once more appeared in the world; his character, his air, his manner, as you yourselves confess, are totally changed. Yet you still affect to dread his future conduct. He has the same vivacity; you call it petulance: his manner has acquired a new softness, his morals are become more pure; you accuse him of hypocrisy. I cannot help believing I know him better than you.

The

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The eyes of a mistress are penetrating : you still see him such as he was ; I, his Henrietta, see him as he is.

When the soul is hurried out of itself, is it possible to wear a mask ? I have seen him actuated by all the violence, all the unguarded transport, all the delirium of tenderness.—He was ever the same, ever amiable, ever virtuous, ever formed to be adored. Judge how seducing he must have been in those moments : he whose exterior alone is sufficient to enchant all who behold him !

Yes, my Julia, I begin to feel as strongly as you, that a *tête à tête* with the man we love is attended with infinite danger to our frail virtue. Let the lessons of wisdom and modesty be engraved ever so profoundly on our souls, our senses will speak in

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spite of us; and their language, assisted by that of a lover, too easily weakens all other impressions.

I yesterday experienced this danger. Corfange was alone with me. In the midst of those transports with which his tenderness inspired him, he let me perceive the most ardent desires; desires which could not fail of exciting mine.

I know not whether he observed this, or whether his passion became at length too violent to suffer restraint; but he dared to press me.—I saw plainly the aim of all his wishes; and my weak heart, already too much softened, had scarce force left sufficient to refuse him. He snatched, he multiplied, all the favors which innocent love permits, and which I had before granted him.

He

He locked me in his arms, he shut with his lips my mouth which attempted to chide him.— O Julia ! could I have known the danger of these careffes ! — Corfange had full empire over me, he would have obtained all he had dared to seize — the sensation of that cruel kiss still fills my whole soul. Henrietta was perhaps near the moment of ceasing to be worthy of her Julia, when we heard Monf. De l'Etang advance towards us.

Corfange recovered soon from his disorder ; as for me, I could not so easily recal my wandering senses. Even at this moment, whilst I am giving you this detail, the same emotion hurries away my soul. I still see the eyes of Corfange fixed on mine, still feel his arms press me to his bosom ; his pure and odorous breath seems

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still to mix itself with mine; his mouth — my soul seems to leave me with every sigh which this dear idea draws from me.

Adieu, Julia! May you experience these pleasures! may my brother be favored like Corfange!

Adieu! Pardon me. I feel that my senses are confused. How do my thoughts degenerate from their former purity! how do I blush! But — how happy am I!

HENRIETTA.

L E T.

L E T T E R XXIII.

TO HENRIETTA DE ST. FORLAIX,
at St. Forlaix.

Paris.

I RECEIVED lately a letter addressed to me, which could not however be intended for me. It appeared to be the hand-writing of Henrietta; but as I found there neither her modest style, nor her pure and decent thoughts, it cannot certainly be her who writes to me.—My Henrietta has all the modesty which becomes her rank, and still more her sex; if she was ever capable of any act of dishonor, which is impossible, she would blush so much for her own weakness, that she could never display

play the detestable picture to the eyes of a friend, a friend still ardently attached to virtue.

My Henrietta is virtuous, and if she should suffer her heart to be surprized by any passion, this passion would be virtuous also; her imagination, ever regulated by propriety and decency, would not allow itself to be hurried away by ideas hateful and unworthy of her.

This letter is filled with images at which virtue shudders. It can only proceed from a mind disordered, and in some degree corrupted.

It is addressed to me; to me for whom such pictures were not intended.

I wish

I wish to know the young person by whom it was written. She is not yet lost perhaps beyond resource; she has not yet perhaps fallen into the gulph which opens under her feet: I would warn her, I would endeavor to point it out to her.

“ You do not then perceive,” would I say to her, “ the fatal consequences of the situation to which your heart exposes you? Imagination inflames the desires; and when, with those of a lover, one has one’s own to combat, the voice of honor is very weak: our ears are shut to its remonstrances.

“ Imprudent as you are, you accustom yourself to grant favors which appear to you trifling; these favors will, whilst they weaken your power of resisting, ren-

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“der your lover more daring and pre-
 “sumptuous; they will make him ex-
 “pect still greater, which you will be no
 “longer able to refuse him; he will take
 “advantage of the sensibility which he
 “discovers in you, and your certain de-
 “struction will be the inevitable conse-
 “quence. Combat and surmount this dan-
 “gerous sensibility, or at least endeavor to
 “dissemble it. Do still more; virtue ex-
 “pects of you this effort; renounce the
 “presence of him who excites it. This
 “sacrifice is painful; but honor, to whom
 “every thing is due, demands it.

“If, unhappily,” I would add, “you are
 “fallen into the error I wish to prevent,
 “or even into the greatest, your friend,
 “though obliged to withdraw part of her
 “esteem, will not, however, refuse you her
 “friendship; she will join to it even the
 “tendrest

“tenderest compassion for your weakness,
“because her heart is truly attached to
“you. Turn then to this friend, she will
“know how to pity you; but she neither
“can nor ought to partake your extrava-
“gances, of which the knowledge can only
“make her blush for you and herself.”

This, my Henrietta, is what I would say to this young unfortunate, who is in such danger of falling a victim to her blind and inconsiderate passion. Do not you, my dear friend, think me right? would you not, if in my place, say as much? and if you were in that of this young person, would you not receive with pleasure these admonitions, the warmth of which has its rise in the ardent zeal of friendship?

You would undoubtedly have made the proper use of them, because one moment
of

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of weakness could not have been able to eradicate for ever from a soul like yours, either the seeds of virtue or those of reason.

Adieu! I am called away. I had, notwithstanding, a thousand things to tell you: they interest me so strongly, that they cannot fail of interesting my friend.

I reserve them till the next post. Adieu, dear Henrietta! inform me immediately of your health.

Yours,

JULIA.

LET-

L E T T E R XXIV.

To Monf. DE PRELE, at St. Forlaix.

IT is at length come, my dear uncle, this fo much desired regiment. You will no longer accufe your nephew of indolence; he is now a Colonel. My eftablifhment in the world, the pleafure of having done a thing agreable to you, and a ftill greater happinefs, that of talking to you at my eafe of the charms and virtues of my Julia, are amongst the advantages which this title has procured me. I owe this neither to the credit of the Marquis of R——, nor the power of the Duke of B——, but entirely to the cares of the very obliging Marshalls D'Eff—.

She

She returned from Choisi only the 14th. The instant of her arrival she sent to seek me; she held out her hand as soon as she perceived me. "Ah! see my Colonel!" cried she, presenting me my brevet: whilst I ran it hastily over, she pressed my hand, and honored me with a thousand caresses. It was certainly the proper moment to be grateful. You will perhaps chide me for not being as much so as I ought; but in truth I was too impatient to carry this news to Madame D'Ornance, even to perceive the inticing airs, the gracious invitations, of Madame D'Eff—.

I am ignorant whether she attributed my inaction to joy, or to my little knowledge of the world: all I know is, that she had no kind of reason to be pleased with me, and that it was not her fault I did not do better.

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better. As to the rest, she revenged herself sufficiently ; it was not possible for me to disengage myself from her all the evening. I was obliged to defer till morning the decision of my destiny. What a night is that, my dear uncle, which intervenes between impatient desire and happiness !

I was at Madame D'Ornance's gate long before her hour of rising. Fear, hope, joy, the various sentiments which agitated me, almost deprived me of the use of speech. She prevented me. " Well, my dear St. Forlaix, this regiment?" said she, with an eagerness truly maternal.

I had my brevet in my hand. I presented it to her. She ran it over without reading it : a joy, the most affectionate possible, spread itself over her countenance :

" My

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“ My dear child,” said she, embracing me with tears in her eyes, “ your happiness enchants me : how do I wish it depended on me to render it perfect !”

“ Ah ! Madam, said I,” embracing her knees in my turn, “ it depends on you alone ; you alone can fill up the measure of it.”

“ How, my dear child ! speak, what can I do for you ?”

“ Realize the title with which you have had the goodness to honor me. I adore Mademoiselle D’Ornance ; I would not have dared to pretend to her hand, before I had an establishment to offer her : I at length possess this establishment, which is only valuable to me on
her

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“ her account: If it is not unworthy of
“ her, and of you, you have it in your
“ power to render me the happiest of
“ mankind.”

Madame D'Ornance was some time without replying to me—what an interval to an enamoured heart! “ My dear St. Forlaix,” said she at length, “ is it possible
“ you can think of my daughter? What! shall I have the delight to see my family united to yours by so tender a tie?
“ This is rather to grant me a favor than to ask one of me. I cannot doubt but
“ M^{ons}. D'Ornance, to whom you ought
“ to address yourself, will hear this proposal with transport. His sentiments must
“ be very different from mine, if he is
“ not at the height of joy on hearing it.”

An

An answer so flattering to my hopes put me out of myself: I overwhelmed Madame D'Ornance with the most lively marks of my gratitude. She appeared as much affected as myself. "But, Madam," said I, "you have done little in granting me her hand. Her hand without her heart would be only a present fatal to us both; and though this heart depends only in her, yet 'tis to you I must address myself to obtain it."

Madame D'Ornance praised my delicacy extremely, promised to find out the sentiments of her daughter, to allow me to endeavor to know them myself, and even to do her utmost to inspire her with such as were favorable.

We

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We were going together to Julia's apartment; her mother to inform her of my new rank; and I, if not to hear from her mouth, at least to read in her eyes, what I ought to fear or hope; when a billet from the duke of B—retarded for some days a moment so interesting, and full of charms. It was in these terms:

“ To Monf. DE ST. FORLAIX.

“ Receive, my dear friend, the most sincere congratulations from the Marquis
“ of R—— and myself. We had prepos-
“ sessed all hearts in your favor: Madame
“ D'Eff—has finished our work. We
“ would have wished you to have owed
“ your success intirely to our friendship,
“ rather than to the Marshalefs's services;
“ but that would have been against the
“ common

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“common forms. You must be presented to-day. Come to me instantly, and we will set off together for Versailles. I shall acquit myself with great pleasure of so flattering an employment.”

I read this billet to Madame D’Ornance. She pressed me to leave her that moment. I was not dressed, and I was expected instantly. She felt that my first interview with her daughter ought to be long, and that, if otherwise, it must be very painful to both. She insisted on my going, without even letting her know I had been there.

You will judge that, at my return, my first care was to fly to her. I cannot express what new emotions agitated me at her sight. Till that moment, though the
idea

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Idea of possessing her had always been present to my soul, though I had encouraged a hope of some time obtaining this happiness, yet I had always seen it at such a distance, that I had never been able to form a real and distinct image of it.

I was now with my Julia, I saw her, I spoke to her. I said to myself, "In eight days, perhaps, I shall possess all those charms which I now behold with such admiration."

My mind could not perfectly conceive this felicity. I even accused the sensibility of my soul of not being sufficiently great, since it was only capable of experiencing such confused transports.

I waited the moment when Madame D'Ornance would first speak on the subject

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ject so dear to my heart. I regarded Julia with an eagerness which disconcerted her. I wished, but had not courage, to tell her all that passed in my soul.

Madame D'Ornance enjoyed our embarrassment. It was not till the desert appeared, that she put an end to it.

This amiable mother turned the conversation on the subject of marriage. "You must think soon of fixing yourself in the world, Mons. St. Forlaix," said she. She pretended at the same time to seek among our common acquaintance the person whom it would be most to my advantage to marry.

I smiled, with an air which implored her to spare me. Julia cast down her eyes;
she

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She did not dare to raise them, lest her confusion should be remarked. She blushed, she made repeated efforts to leave her seat.

Her embarrassment would have been much less, if she had believed her mother spoke seriously ; but she guessed Madame D'Ornance's real sentiments, and expected every moment that the conversation would lead to an explanation.

Without pity for her situation, as if it was not sufficiently distressing, her mother addressed herself to her in the same style :
“ Help us, Julia,” said she, “ to marry
“ Monf. De St. Forlaix ; he is our friend,
“ and a wife of your chusing will, I am
“ convinced, be agreeable to him.”

Julia rose, with that grace, that modesty, which ever accompanies her ; some tears

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fell from her eyes; perhaps a little vexation, to see herself so trifled with, mixed with them. She entreated her mother to allow her to retire.

“ Ah ! Madam,” cried I, “ this is too
 “ cruel. — Lovely Julia,” continued I,
 obliging her to seat herself, “ you are the
 “ choice of my heart; it can never desire
 “ any other object. I am permitted to
 “ talk this language to you, to pretend to
 “ your heart; yet 'tis from you alone I
 “ will hope to receive it. This liberty
 “ which I have obtained is but the begin-
 “ ning of my happiness; it depends on you
 “ only to render it perfect.”

Julia neither replied, nor looked at me :
 she turned towards her mother, who smiled,
 and held out her hand. She hid in the
 bosom of this tender mother her face,
 bathed

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bathed in tears. I took her hand, she withdrew it from between mine.

“ Well, my dear daughter,” said Madame D’Ornance, “ does the choice I have made incline you to pardon the perplexity I have occasioned you ?”

Julia continued still silent —

“ Shall I then take from Monf. St. Forlaix the hopes I have given him ?”

“ Ah! Madam,” replied Julia without changing her posture, “ are you not very sure of my obedience ?”

“ Cruel Julia !” cried I in my turn, “ will obedience satisfy him who wishes to owe you to affection ? do you believe me capable of desiring your hand with-

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“out the heart which alone can make it
“valuable? O Julia, Julia! if ’tis obe-
“dience only which gives you to me, how-
“ever dear you are to my heart, I will
“refuse a gift which is not accompanied
“by”—— the strong emotion of my soul
prevented me from proceeding.

She made no reply; but she suffered me,
without resistance, to take her hand: I
kissed it a thousand times, I pressed it to
my heart; I took also that of her mother.
“Ah, Madam,” said I to her with ardor,
“what charms does your presence give to
“so soft a moment!”

Julia now turned on me those speaking
eyes, in which modesty and tenderness seem-
ed still at variance.

“It

“ It requires a length of time,” said she,
“ to merit the gift you ask ; but you can-
“ not but deserve my heart, since you are
“ judged worthy of it by my mother.”

My transports answered for me. Madame D'Ornance partook my raptures ; and Julia appeared to share them also, as far as modesty permitted. Her mother embraced us.

“ Be happy, my children,” said she ;
“ you are both too amiable not to love for
“ ever.”

I will not attempt to tell you how the rest of the day passed ; my heart, inebriated with delight, has not been able to retain the remembrance.

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Behold, my dear uncle, the terms on which we are. I write to Monf. D'Ornance, to my mother, and to Monf. De l'Etang. May the tender interest you have taken in my Julia, engage you to hasten the moment which is to make me happy! You are satisfied; endeavor that I shall be so. Adieu! my dear uncle! how eagerly do I wish to see you — and that you should see my Julia.

ST. FORLAIX.

L E T.

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L E T T E R XXV.

To Madame ST. FORLAIX, at St. For-
laix.

Madam,

Paris.

YOUR hopes have not been disappoint-
ed: the rank you desired to see me
hold in my profession has been granted me.
I have obtained the regiment of P —.

The glory acquired by my father in
arms, the protection of those friends who
have all the attachment to you which your
virtue merits, an attachment of which I
have felt the happy effects, have prevailed
on the King to overlook my youth, and

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the very few services I have hitherto rendered the state. 'Tis to you, therefore, I owe this success. It is a new benefit you have conferred upon me. Alas! there is one yet more dear, which I ardently desire to owe to your indulgence.

Fortune seems desirous to grant me every good at the same time. Whilst I waited to solicit my regiment, I gained the friendship of a respectable family, to which ours has been always tenderly attached, that of Monf. D'Ornance. The amiable Madame D'Ornance has had the goodness to receive me, ever since I arrived here, with a tenderness of which yours alone can give an idea. I have seen her adorable daughter; and my heart, enchanted with her virtues, even to a greater degree than my eyes were dazzled by her charms, has not been able to resist the desire of making her mine.

My

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My pursuit has been approved by Madame D'Ornance ; and Mademoiselle Julia has not refused the offer of my heart.

It depends then on you alone, Madam, to fill up the measure of your indulgence and my felicity..

You know the antiquity, the nobility, the virtues, of this family ; you know how advantageous this alliance is to me in all respects. My uncle has assured me several times in his letters, that you yourself desire it. How sweet will it be to me to follow the choice of the most tender of mothers, whilst I am following that of my heart !

I am then permitted to hope, that you will regard my wishes with a favorable eye!

E S.

Have.

Have I not already had too many proofs of your goodness to fear you should stop the course of it in this instance? No, you will not cease to be my mother at the very moment when I have the most occasion to find one as tender as you have ever been.

I had the honor of being presented to the King yesterday. This Monarch received me with that noble, that elevated goodness, which distinguishes him amongst the Princes of his age. I could not, on my part, without a respectful awe, see myself so near the august person whom I had just been vowing to serve at the expence of my blood. What an incitement to courage is the gracious smile of our Sovereign! with what zeal do we serve him, when we carry his image at the bottom of our hearts!

I inclose

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I inclose in this a letter for Monf. D'Or-
nance. If my choice appears as agreeable
to you and Monf. De l'Etang as I have rea-
son to hope, I entreat you to send it to him.
I shall have received from you more than
life, if you deign to add to it the blessing
which will make it truly dear to me.

I have the honor to be,

Madam, &c.

St. FORLAIX.

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L E T T E R XXVI.

(Enclosed in the foregoing.)

To Monf. D'ORNANCE.

S I R,

Paris.

IF the name and the glory of my father, and, above all, the friendship you had for each other, are recommendations sufficiently forcible with you, I may dare to ask, of you a favor on which depends all the happiness of my life.

The friendship which has so long united our families is a blessing so justly valuable,

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able, that I wish to strengthen it by still dearer ties.

I too ardently wish this happiness, to suffer the temerity of the attempt to deter me from making it.

All who are yours, Sir, have received from you that impression of virtue which great souls communicate to each other.

You have a son worthy to support the glory of his ancestors. His friendship has been my first pleasure, and is the more dear to me, as it seems to bring me nearer to you. But may I not be permitted to change the title of friend into one still more tender and more sacred? My father deserved your affection by the strong resemblance of your characters; I have lost him;

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him; may I not recover him in you? Ah, Sir! can I think myself worthy of so inestimable a blessing, when I reflect that the concession which enables me to acquire it, bestows on me at the same time your adorable daughter!

This, Sir, is the favor I presume to ask of you.—The hand of Mademoiselle D'Ornañce is an invaluable gift. I have no plea, no claim to merit her, but the most tender love, and the most inviolable attachment to all dear to you. Yet I have dependance enough on these pleas to hope to obtain her by this means.

You know my family, Sir; you know whether my rank and fortune can justify the choice your friendship may make of me.

My

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My whole felicity depends on your resolution.

I expect my sentence in the early reply with which I entreat you to honor,

S I R,

Yours; &c.

ST. FORLAIX.

LET.

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L E T T E R XXVII.

To Monf. ST. FORLAIX, at Paris.

S I R,

D'Ornance.

THERE is nobody who would not regard as the greatest advantage the alliance of the Marquis De St. Forlaix, whether in respect to birth, to rank, or merit. I am more honored than all others, Sir, by the preference you have deigned to give to my family. Whatever draws more closely the ties which attach me to your parents, cannot but be very flattering to me. I will even add, that the most powerful

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powerful motive to my compliance, is the
desire of being personally allied to you,
to you for whom I have conceived the
highest esteem, merely on the reputation
of your virtues.

Far therefore from fearing a refusal
from me, you ought to be persuaded, Sir,
of the extreme pleasure your offers give me.
This marriage is notwithstanding so dis-
advantageous to you, that I think I shall
render you a service in advising you to
think no more of it.

You are twenty-two, Sir, and you are a
Colonel; I am near forty, and am nothing.
My ancestors possessed the same dignities;
but the more glory they acquired, the
greater is my disgrace. What increase of
honor will my daughter bring to her
husband?

Mons.

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Monf. St. Forlaix ought to difdain the alliance of a family who have not done all they ought.

I am greedy of honor, Sir; I have defpised the titles which I had a right to poffefs, becaufe I am only defirous of thofe which glory gives.

That alone enflames me, and I have neglected it. We therefore deferve ourfelves to be neglected.

I have proved that this marriage would not be advantageous to you. What can you oppofe to my arguments? Love, perhaps! Ah, Sir! what a fatal word!

I fhall now fpeak to you, not in the ftyle of a father blinded by his affection, but
in

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in that of an honest man, who knows equally the virtues and defects of his children. My daughter is certainly worthy to inspire with a pure and virtuous passion a man as estimable as you are; not by that vain beauty with which nature has endowed her as an ornament to her other qualities, but by those very qualities which distinguish her, and procure her all the glory which becomes her sex. But it is this love itself which alarms me for you. 'Twas that which caused the shameful inactivity which has dishonored me.

You have not indeed so much to apprehend from it as I had: your road in life is decided; mine was not when I felt its first influence. But do you think it will be easy to fulfil equally well the duties of the profession you have embraced, and those of father and husband, which you wish,

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with to join to them? When the voice of honor strikes your soul, which love holds enslaved, shall you have courage to make a choice? have you firmness to be master of that choice, when a beloved wife, trembling for your safety, bathing you with her tears, clasps you tenderly in her arms, those fetters so powerful, so dear to an amorous heart? when she shews you, in his cradle, her smiling son, that tender infant of whom you are the only hope, and on whom your hopes are also fixed?

“ Alas !” she will say, “ is the weight of
“ arms then more dear to you than that
“ of this adored pledge of our love, who
“ holds out his little hands to you, and
“ careffes you ?

“ Dunque

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“ Dunque (dicea) crudel, più chël mio

“ aspetto,

“ Del mar l'orrida faccia à te fia grata ?

“ Fian l'arme al braccio tuo più caro

“ pèso,

“ Che'l picciol figlio, a i dolci Scherzi

“ inteso *.”

War will display her standards; the signal will be given for battle.—Glory will attend on courage; and whilst you are hesitating whether you shall obey her call, she will have taken her flight far beyond your reach.

I have been unequal to this rigorous trial. I have sunk under it: dread it,

* These verses are taken from Tasso, they are almost translated by what precedes. Mons. St. Forlaix having served in Italy, Mons. D'Ornance might, with propriety, make a quotation in the language of that country.

therefore,

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therefore, I entreat you. You are now firm in the road of honor; run it with a rapid pace. Time, if neglected, will bring regret; regret how vain and useless!

Do not suffer yourself to be stopped by the tender bonds which have kept me inactive. I do not wish the shame which hangs over us should obscure the blaze which renders you illustrious.

Behold, Sir, the arguments which I have thought it necessary to use to you.

I repeat, not only that I have no other motive to refuse you, but that I feel in the strongest manner all the honor and advantage of your offers.

Attribute, therefore, to the lively interest I take in whatever concerns you, to
the

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the friendship which will for ever attach
me to your respectable family, the oppo-
sition which I thought it my duty to make
to your wishes.

I see your glory in the same light I
should have seen my own, if love had not
veiled my eyes, and disturbed my reason.
Be persuaded, Sir, I do not feel less warm-
ly the value of your esteem.

I have the honor to be, &c.

D'ORNANCE.

END OF VOL. I.

